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THE ESSENTIAL NEBULUS PLAYERS GUIDE
BANGKOK KNIGHTS/SLAINE/720°/RAMPAGE/DRILLER REVIEWED
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We told you so!..

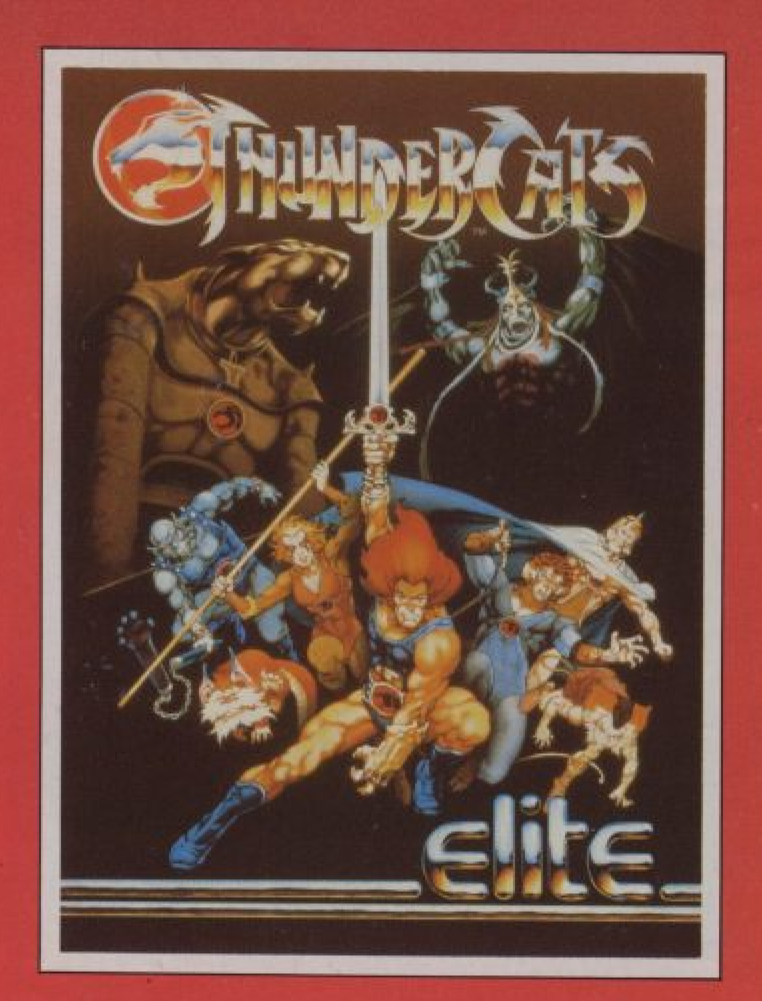
"Don't spend a penny until yo

They said, ...



"Wow! Thundercats is brilliant. The graphics can't be faulted: The screen is extremely colourful and the animation topnotch. Great stuff, I bet the T.V. series aint as good as the game."

Rating: Crash Smash 91% - Crash.



"The game grabs you from the moment you load it up. Brilliant graphics and superb action make Thundercats a real winner."

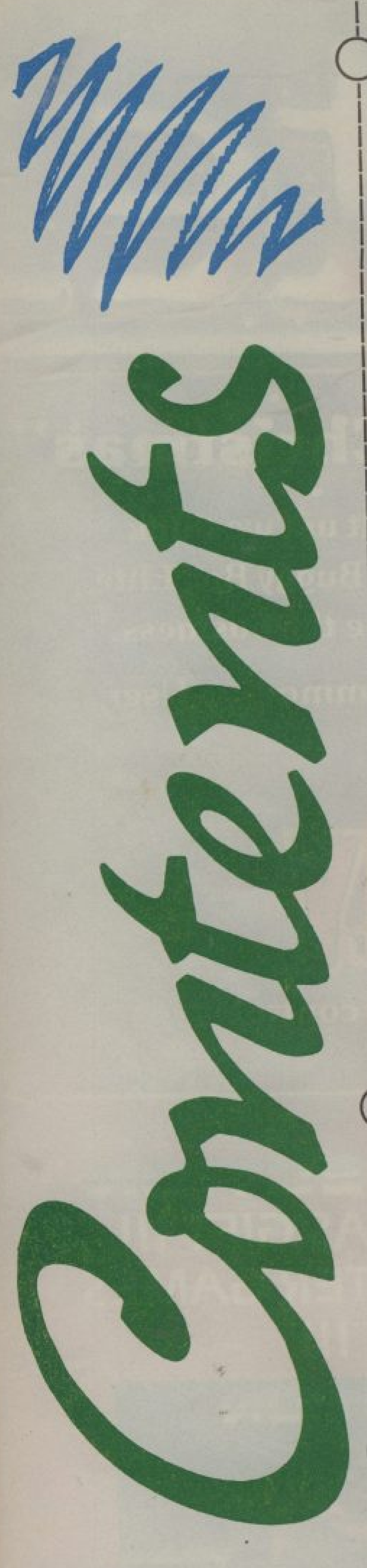
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C. & V. G.

Elite Systems Limited, Eastern Avenu

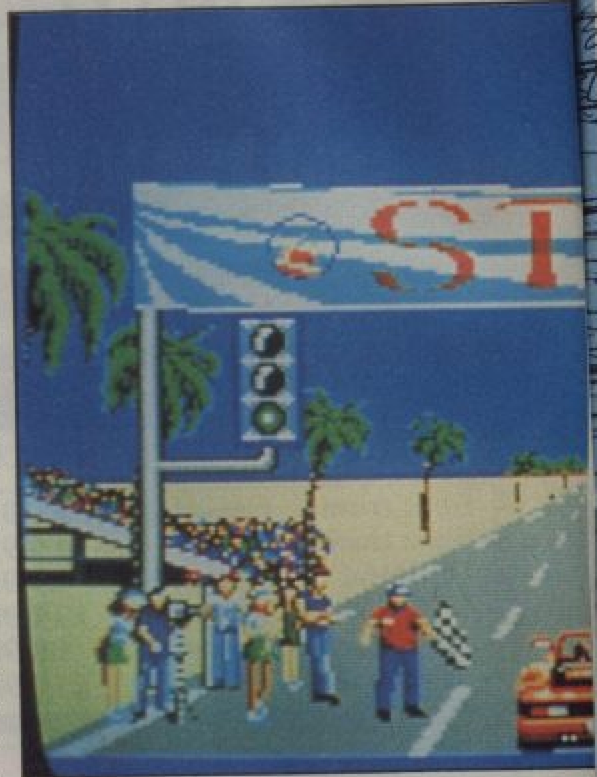


Features

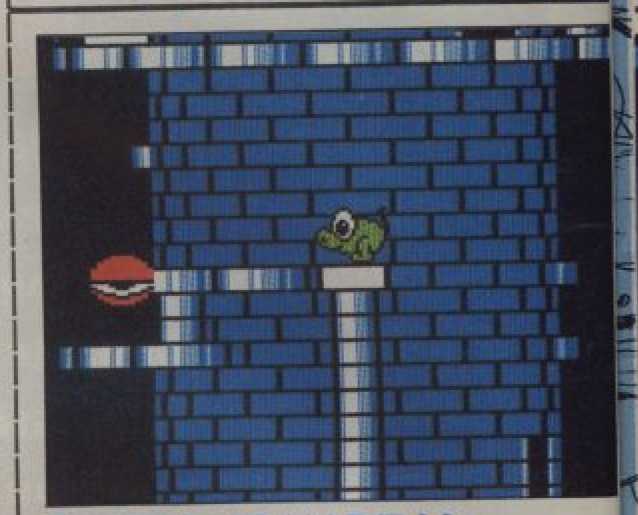
News & Reviews

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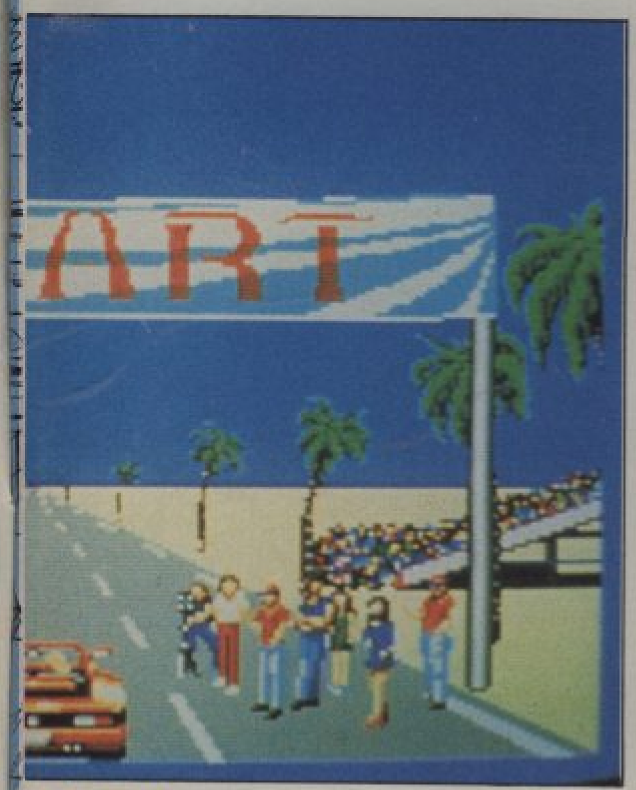


● HOT GOSSIP/P162



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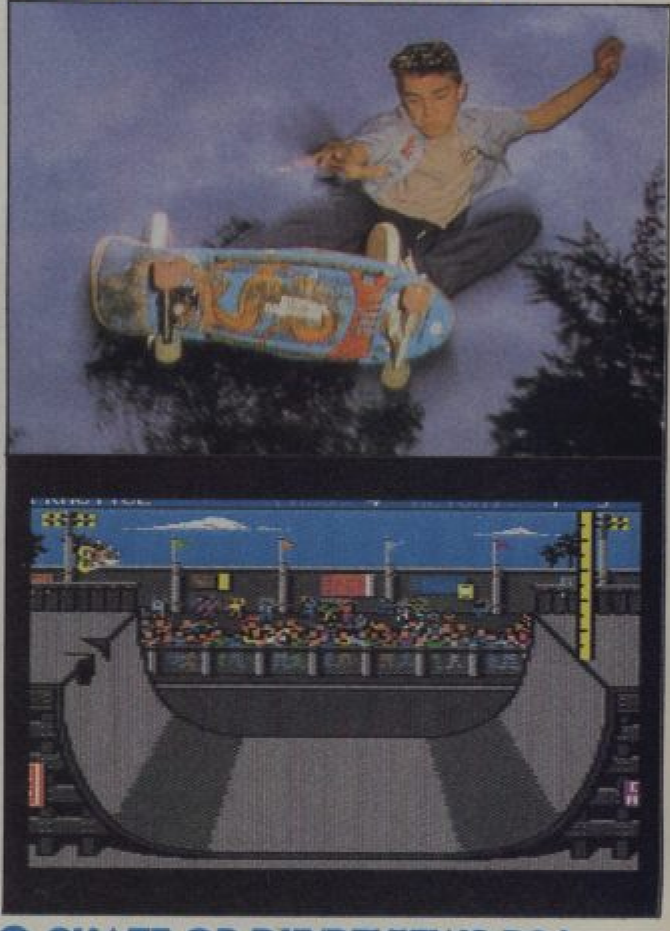
Slip on your shades and slip into this casually cool copy of C+VG! You'll need those dark glasses 'cos the line up of goodies we've got inside is just going to dazzle you! First we've got a genuine Out Run arcade machine to GIVE AWAY. Then there's always the FREE soundtrack tape stuck on the front cover. Give your ears a treat and tune in to the arcade sounds of Out Run and 720°! Our tipsters have been hard at work to bring you an exclusive Player's Guide to the most original game of '87, Nebulus. Then we take another long and lingering look at the Amiga and Atari ST – hot news and reviews from the mega-machines. All this plus prizes like a Chamber of Living Lightening, a TV with a video or tons of games! All this plus reviews of hot games like Bangkok Knights, Rampage, 720° and many more. Your life just won't be worth living without this issue of C+VG – so BUY it!



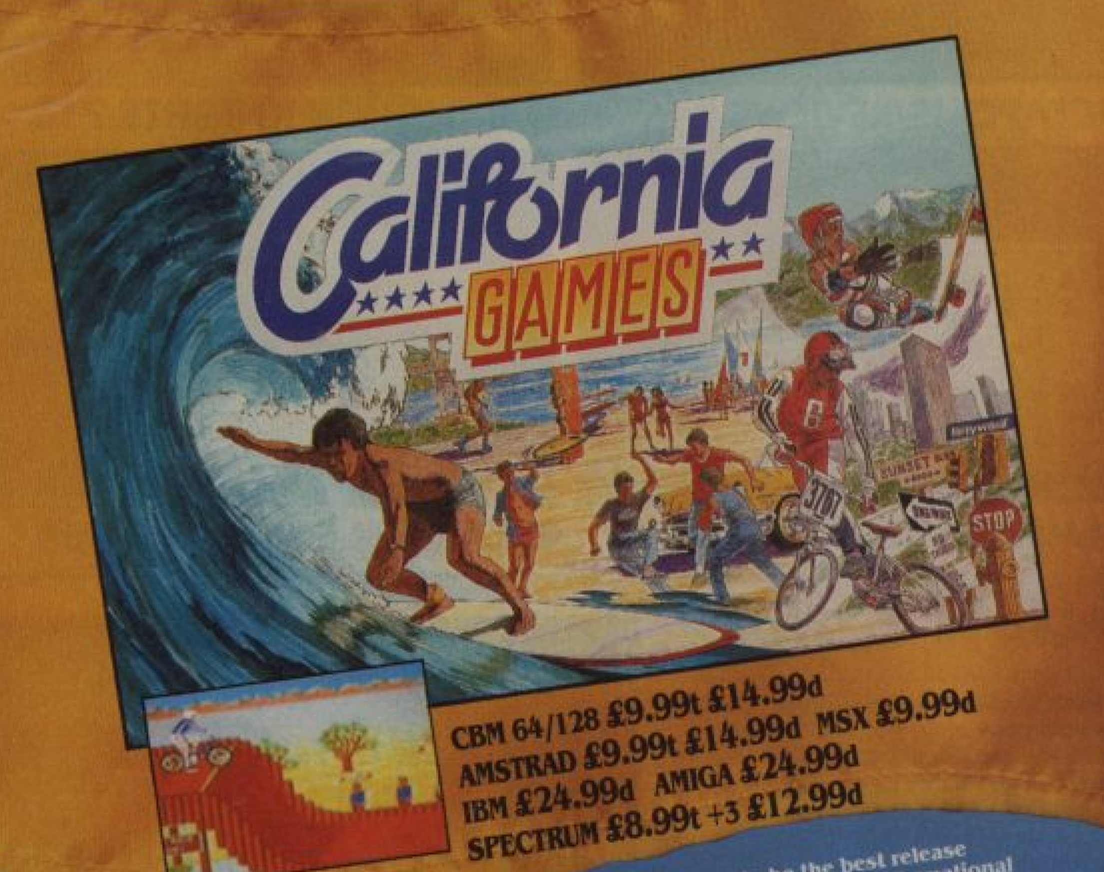








"The Undisputed Champ



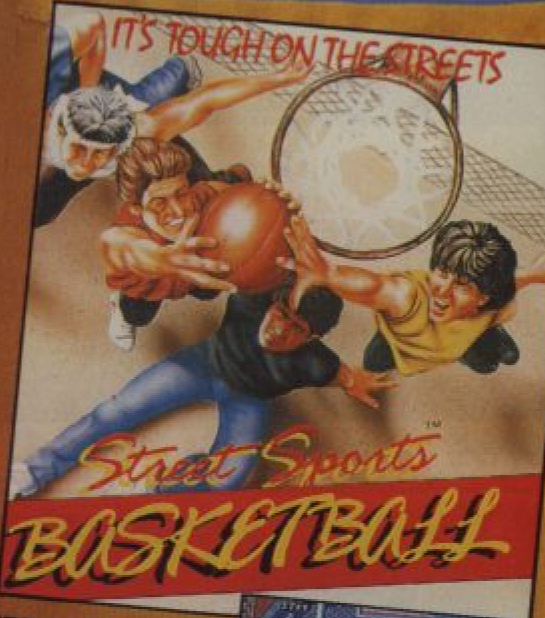
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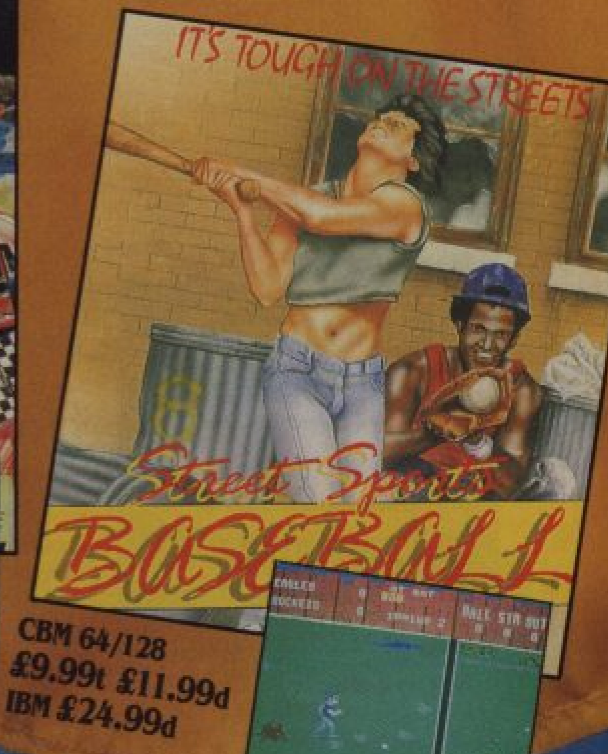
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The game, called *Great Big Fat Hairy Deal*, was due out around Easter last year.

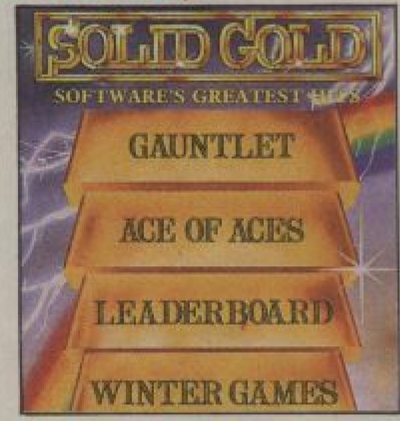
The game play involves helping Garfield to rescue his beloved Arlene who has been captured and held prisoner in the City Pound.

He's got to find and trade various things to help him in his quest and keep his strength up by eating the right food.

Mega Mix!

■ Okay, what's going to be the number one game this Christmas? *Outrun, Thundercats, Buggy Boy* or **720 degrees?** All these are in with a chance.

But watch out for some of the excellent compilation packs about. They represent excellent value for money and one of these might just make it to the top.

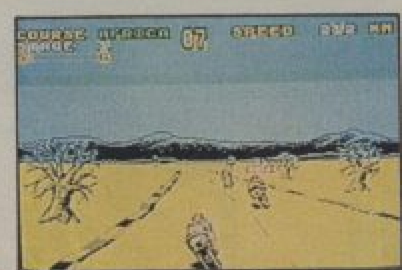


First up there's **Solid Gold** from US Gold out on CBM 64, Spectrum, Spectrum +3, Amstrad. The five games included are the smash coin-op conversion *Gauntlet*, the flight sim arcade shoot 'em up *Ace of Aces*, the golf classic *Leaderboard, Winter Games* and *Infiltrator*.

Ocean's offering is **Live Ammo** with *Army Moves, Rambo, Green Beret, Top Gun* and *The Great Escape*: **The Magnicient 7** — *Head Over Heels, Cobra, Short Circuit, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, Arkanoid, Wizball* and *The Great Escape* — and finally **Game Set and Match**, ten sports games.

Hang a bout!

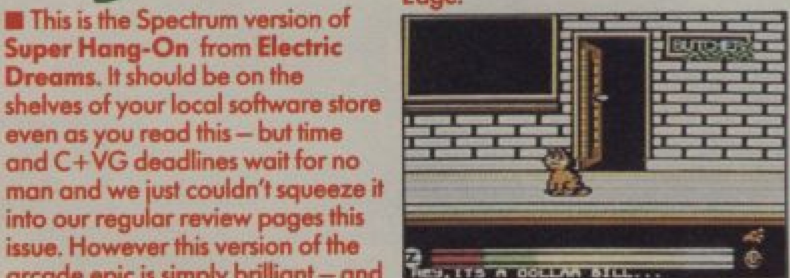
■ This is the Spectrum version of **Super Hang-On** from **Electric Dreams**. It should be on the shelves of your local software store even as you read this — but time and C+VG deadlines wait for no man and we just couldn't squeeze it into our regular review pages this issue. However this version of the arcade epic is simply brilliant — and



isn't just a copy of **Enduro Racer** with different graphics. Watch out for a full review next issue.

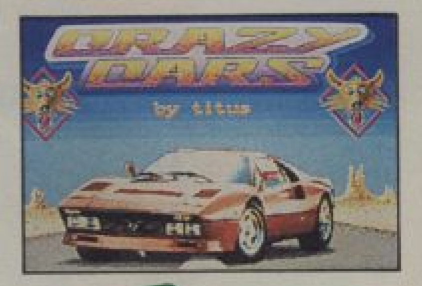
Go-Cat

■ At last! It's **Garfield**, the long awaited computer cartoon caper of your favourite cat, from *The Edge*.



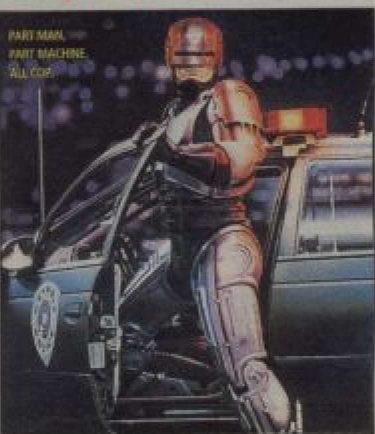
Vroom

■ This is *Crazy Cars* — the game which is about to burn rubber on the Amiga. It's from the French company *Titus* and initial reports say it is excellent. At this very moment Crazy Cars is getting the C+VG road test.



Robo-smash

■ **Robocop**, the bionic cop movie now smashing box office records in America, is due for release in Britain early in the New Year. But don't expect to see the **Ocean** game based on the film before October next year. The game's release will coincide with the film coming out on video.





Score Here!!

■ 'Ere we go, 'ere we go, 'ere we go with a mega-fab comp featuring **Gremlin's** super soccer board game **Gary Lineker's Footballer of the Year**. We've got two of Gazza's brill board games to GIVE away. All you have to do to win one of these exciting games is tell us just how many goals Gary Lineker scored during the last World Cup.

Put your answer on a postcard and rush it off to *Computer and Video Games*, **Garry Lineker Competition**, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Closing date is January 16th, normal C+VG rules apply, and the Ed says anyone who doesn't use a postcard to send their entries in on will be kicked into touch!

Go Garrison

■ Big news is that **Garrison**, the **Gauntlet**-clone for the **Amiga** from **Rainbow Arts**, the German software set up will be released in the UK on the **Go!** label. It's going to be the hottest Amiga game currently on offer — see how it sells! Go! has signed up Rainbow Arts for the UK and the first releases over here will be **Bad Cats**, a sort

Jester Moment!

■ Light up your life by grabbing hold of a **Black Lamp**. This little gem from **Rainbird** is coming soon for the Atari ST. **Black Lamp** is a graphically splendid game, featuring **Jolly Jack the Jester**, destined to become a computer cult character! Created by the **Star Trek** people, **Graham Everett** and **Steve Cain**, plus **Fred Grey**, *Black Lamp* could just be the cutest game yet for the ST. Brilliant animation, big characters, wonderful special FX make this game one to watch out for after Christmas.

The plot goes a bit like this. In order to win the hand of the lovely Princess of Allegoria Jolly Jack has to embark on a quest for the Black Lamp, which is guarded by a deadly dragon. Along the way he has to solve puzzles and fight off 'orrible orcs, wicked witches, evil eagles and a whole host of mean monsters. *Black Lamp* won't cost you a King's ransom either, Rainbird is selling it for £19.95.



of *Combat School* with cats, and **Jinx**, a really original shoot 'em up...

Classy Blaster

■ This is the Spectrum version of **Salamander – Konami's** classic shoot 'em up which will be reviewed next issue. It features neat graphics, fast action and total



addictiveness. Seems that Konami has finally got it together following the disappointing *Jail Break* and *Jackal* conversions. You're going to enjoy *Salamander!*

What Jaws?

■ Prepare yourself for a shark attack! **Firebird's Flying Shark** arcade conversion, is about to cause a stir among shoot 'em-up addicts. The programmers tell us that all the playability of the arcade original is included in the computer version – attacking planes, tanks and other nasties appear in exactly the same sequences, so if you've played **Taito's** original you've got a head



start.

For the rest of you, *Shark* will present quite a challenge. Graphics are good, although the 64 version looks a bit chunky – but the game is horribly addictive.

Our pics show the nifty Spectrum version created by the **Graftgold** team. *Flying Shark* will be available for the C64 (£8.95 tape, £12.95 disc), Spectrum (£7.95), Amstrad (£8.95 tape/, £14.95 disc), Atari ST (£19.95).

Yup Yup!!!

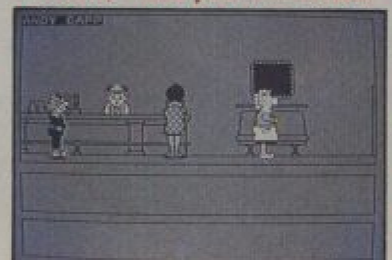
■ Here's a game for the yuppies among you. It's called **Test Drive**, it comes from Electronic Arts and it features on our huge 1988 calendar FREE with this pulse pounding issue!



You can slip behind the wheel of the world's most exotic cars – including the Ferrari Testarossa, Lamborghini Countach or a Porsche – you know, the kind of cars software company bosses get to drive all the time. You drive the different autos over special roads dodging other traffic and the highway patrol.

Cap That

■ "That's 'andy," said Mr Boughton. "What is?" said Mr Metcalfe. This **Andy Capp** mug from **Mirrorsoft**," said Mr Boughton. "Now you can make me a cup of tea". I'm no mug," said Mr Metcalfe, "make your own !?! tea."



And so began another peaceful day in the C+VG offices. But, thanks to **Mirrorsoft**, who are bringing out a new game based on the famous *Daily Mirror* cartoon character Andy Capp, who can offer ten C+VG readers the chance to drink their favourite beverage out of an exclusive **Andy Capp** mug! All you have to do is tell us the name of the creator of Mr Capp. Was it A) L. S. Lowry, B) Reg Smythe, C) Jerry Paris? Send your answer, on a postcard only please, to *Computer and Video Games*, **Andy Capp Comp**, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Brilliant Competition

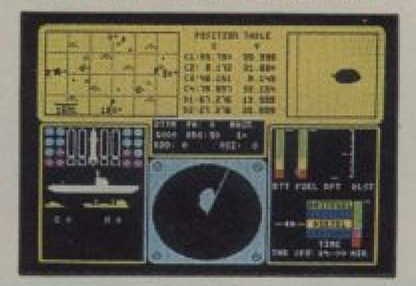
■ Rack It! No, this isn't some new trendy form of abuse – it's the name of the successful budget label created by top UK software house **Hewson**.

To celebrate the success of the label, **Rack it!** wants to give one lucky C+VG reader a special **Laser Tag** set! And all you have to do to claim this wonder-prize is answer a few simple tennis questions.

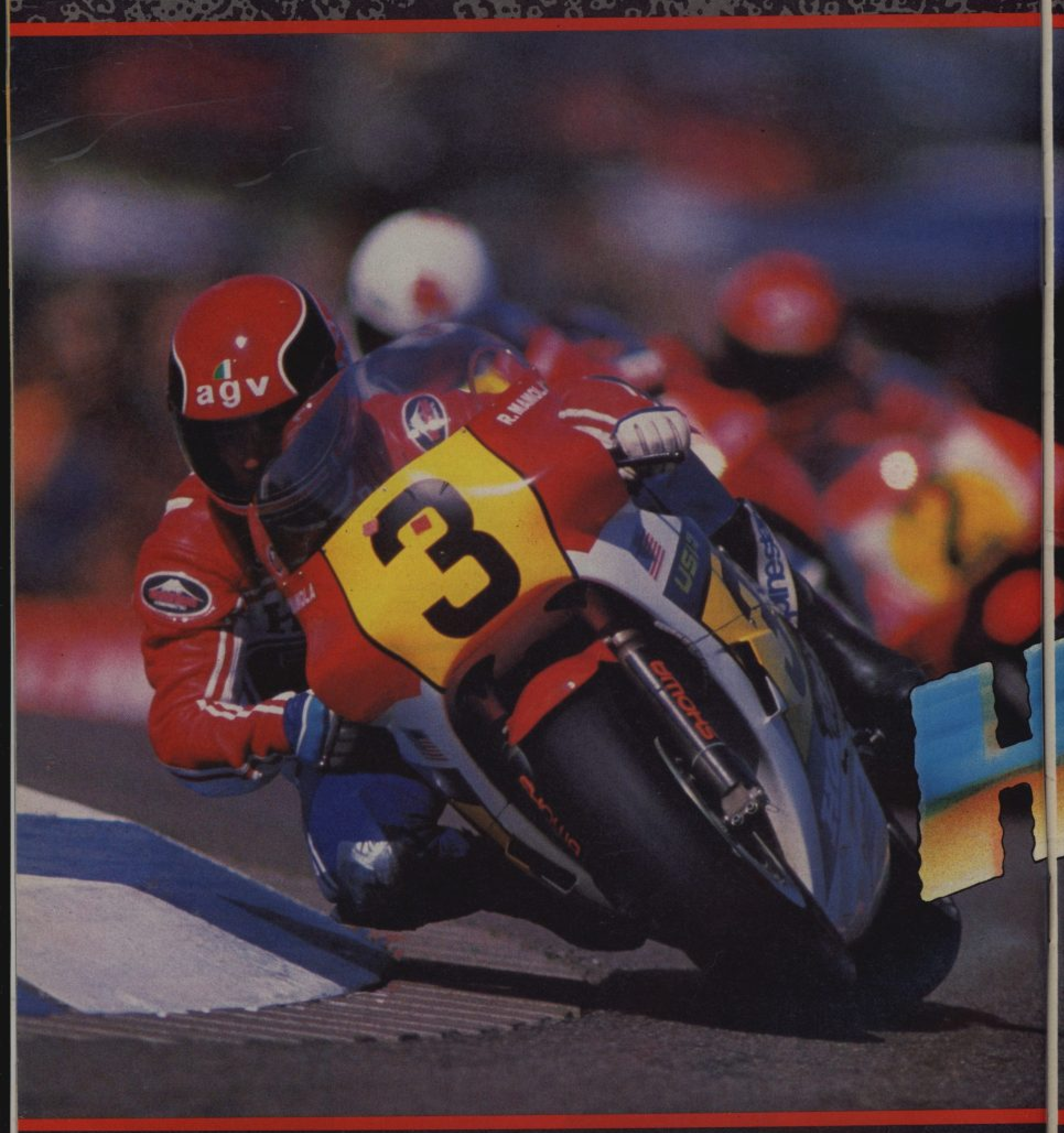
Closing date is January 16th.

● Here are the questions:

1. Name the players who have won the most men's and women's Wimbledon Championships.
2. Who won the Wimbledon Championship in 1987?
3. Name the first black tennis star to win a Wimbledon Championship.



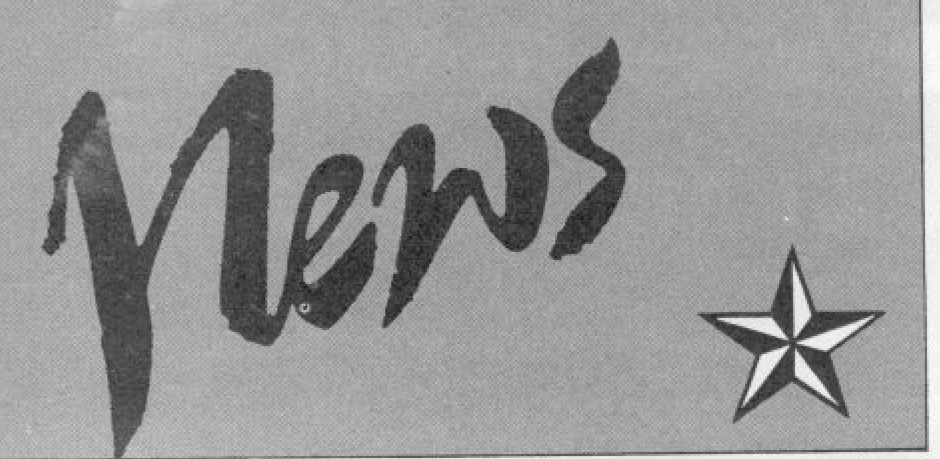
"...the best racing played — even be



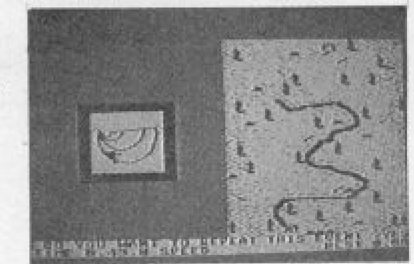
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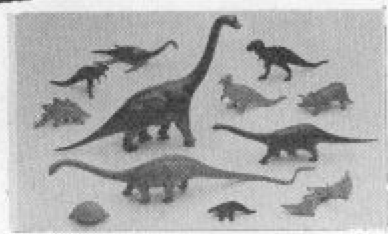


Winter Olympics

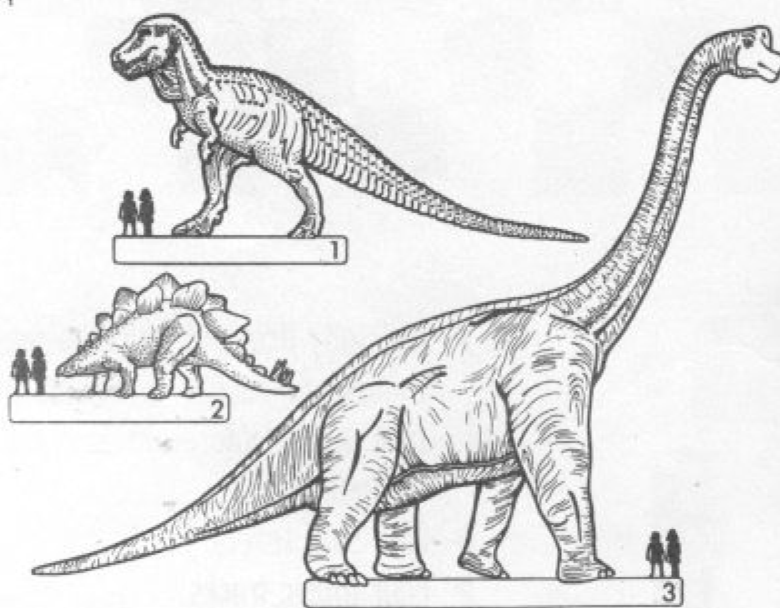


■ Tynesoft has launched an amazing competition to coincide with the release of their **Winter Olympics** game. If you buy the game, which is available on the Spectrum, Commodore 64, Amstrad, C16, Atari ST, Amiga, BBC, IBM and Amstrad to name but a few, you could win a holiday trip to Calgary in Canada to watch the 1988 Winter Olympics!

Dinosaurs Competition



What have dinosaurs got to do with computer games? Ab-so-lute-ly nothing! But here at C+VG we like them and, we KNOW that you like them, so why not, we thought to ourselves give a few of these prehistoric creatures away, thanks to **Invicta**. But don't worry you won't have to find space for a 40 ft monster in your bedroom. We've got three plastic dinosaur sets to give away. Each set consists of 12 incredibly detailed dinosaurs – big ones and little ones – PLUS a fascinating full colour dinosaur world poster! All you have to do is put a name to the dinosaurs we've pictured on this page. Then fill in the coupon and return it rapidly to *Computer and Video Games*, Dig-Up a Dinosaur Competition, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Closing date is January 16th, normal C+VG rules apply and the chief cave man's decision is final.



Name ....

Address ....

● Pic 1) ____________________

● Pic 2) ____________________

● Pic 3) ____________________

● If you don't fancy your chances in our competition then you can purchase one of these ace sets direct from **Invicta**. Just send a cheque or postal order for £20, made payable to Invicta Plastics Ltd, and send it to Invicta Plastics Ltd, Oadby, Leicester.

GO for IT!

● **Go!** the **US Gold** owned label, has signed a £2 million licensing deal with **Capom** to market 10 coin-op conversions in Europe over the next 16 months.

This is in addition to the three Capcom titles **Sidearms, Speed Rambler** and **Bionic Commandos** which should be released soon.

The first four titles to be released as part of the 10 game deal will be **Street Fighter, 1943,** follow-up to 1942, **Black Tigers** and **Tiger Road.**

Tiger Road should be out in the arcades soon. It's a brilliant hack, slash and bash quest with brilliant graphics.

The remaining titles are still under development, according to **George Nakayama,** president of Capcom USA.

Capcom's best known coin-ops games to be converted to computer are **Ghost'n' Goablins** and **Commando.**

Go! will be responsible for all the 8-bit and 16-bit games although the CBM 64 code will be supplied by Capcom from America.

Hunter's Moon

■ Why is **Martin Walker** doing silly things with this disc? Who knows! But we DO know that he's got a spiffing new game ready to hit the streets, your sideboard or the floor – delete where applicable. Martin is the brains behind the **Rupert** games, **Back to the Future** and several other offerings. But **Hunter's Moon** will be his first game on the **Thalamus** label. **Hunter's Moon** puts you in control of the good ship Hunter whose destination is a small but very important moon.



After straying to near to a black hole, the Hunter gets warped to an unknown section of the galaxy, inhabited by strange alien species who exist in hive-like constructions in space.

This strange community is ruled over by the Starcells who control their population of workers and soldiers.

The workers who cannot be killed, 'grow' the structures by scurrying around and replacing damaged areas of the structure whilst you play the game.

To escape the system and attempt the return journey, the player must blast his way through the alien structures. As the hive is destroyed so the workers continue to rebuild it. And negotiating each level requires a subtle blend of dexterity, precision timing and psychopathic blasting.

Each level holds up to four Starcells, all of which must be destroyed before the next level is entered. The Starcells also hold navigational data which is vital if the journey home is to be a successful one.

Hunter's Moon should be available now on the Commodore 64/128, £9.99 on tape, £12.99 on disc.

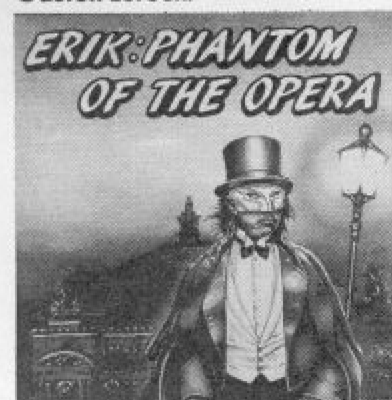
Darlings?



■ Is this a first? The **Darling** brothers – rapidly approaching **Richard Branson** standards in their search for publicity – will be signing copies of their newest games at London's **HMV Store**, in Oxford Street on January 7th. Fans of the **Code Masters** will be able to chat with David and Richard about their games from 5.30 pm.

Rip it up!

■ Horror fans are being well catered for right now what with *Werewolves, Jack the Ripper, Dracula* and so on – and here's another one to check out. **Phantom of the Opera** is out now on the new **Crysys** label for the Spectrum 48/128 (£7.95) and +3 (£9.95). It's an arcade adventure based on the original book by **Gaston Leroux**.



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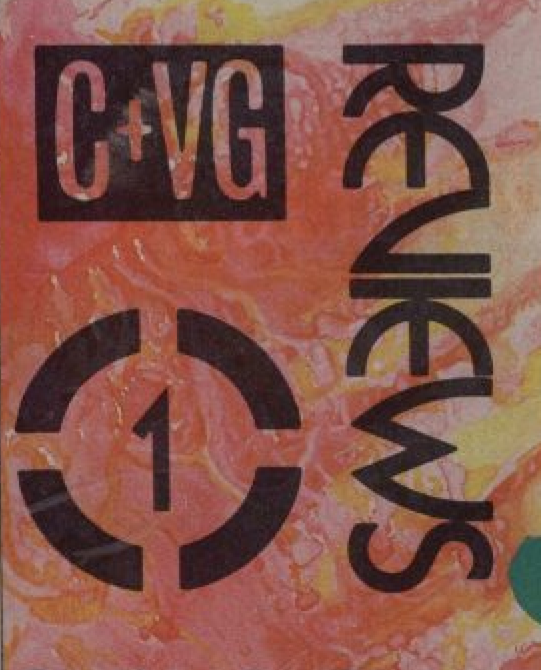
AMSTRAD COMMODORE **8.95**

SPECTRUM AMSTRAD **14.95** DISK

COMMODORE **12.95** DISK

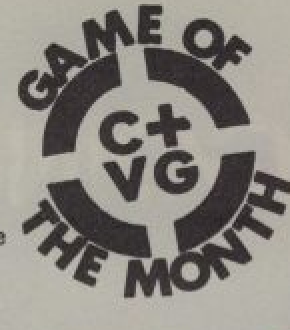


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THIS MONTH:



BANGK

- MACHINES: CBM 64
- SUPPLIER: SYSTEM 3
- PRICE: £9.99
- REVIEWER: PAUL

Bangkok Knights – the only game that gives you the chance to become a Thai boy. Okay, that's the first bad joke out of the way. Now I'll get to grips with this new combat classic from System 3.

The Last Ninja, International Karate 2 and now this. The System 3 guys are certainly on a roll delivering knock-out games, that pack more than an average punch, kick, butt and chop.

This time we're off to old Siam – Thailand now – for a no holds barred experience of the Thais' national sport. It's a mixture of boxing and karate, a lethal mix if ever there was one.

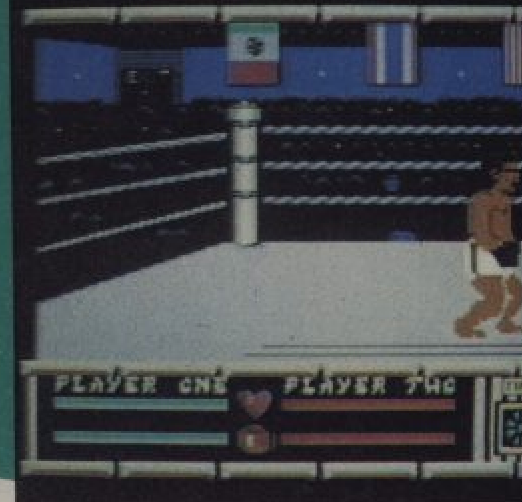
And it's just superb. The word "big" does not describe the graphics for the fighters. Huge is a much better description for these excellent cartoon creations.

The copy of *Bangkok Knight*'s I saw was almost finished but there are extra touches to be added, such as digitised speech in the later stages. But, even so, I would whole-heartedly recommend this game to you.

It's a rag to riches story of a young Thai boy with a gift for street fighting, taking on the local toughs, and gradually finds himself fighting in Bangkok's top stadium.

Your fighter can punch, kick, duck and elbow his way to victory. Your opponents can do





OCTAPOLIS

- MACHINE: C64
- SUPPLIER: ENGLISH SOFTWARE
- PRICE: £9.95 (TAPE) £12.95 (DISC)
- REVIEWER: TIM

The classic Commodore shoot 'em-ups are *Uridium* and *Sanxion* – but now there's a new contender for the title, *Octapolis*. Quite simply it's awesome. Brilliant graphics, sounds like you won't believe and addictive gameplay that shakes the C+VG scale.

The whole thing has been put together by Jukka Tapanimaki, a Finnish programmer destined for big things – just like his fellow countryman Stavros Fasoulas, he seems able to squeeze things out of the 64 that you thought just couldn't be done.

Things like the huge – almost arcade quality – monsters, which appear in the platform part of the game.

But before we get on to details let's take a look at the plot.

By the year 3987, the Galactic Imperium was mightier than ever. One by one, it had swallowed up all solar systems and alien races. The dreaded fleets of the Imperium were feared all over the Galaxy, and with good reason: one fully armed battle cruiser was enough to blow up a whole planet. No one was strong enough to resist the power of the Imperium.

Except for a small defiant planet which had eight towering cities rising about its barren surface: the planet of Octapolis.

Its secret weapon was one of enormous mental power. In the vicinity of the planet, the most valiant enemy space warrior became a bumbling idiot and even the most sophisticated artificial intelligence began to contradict the Laws of Robotics.

The Imperium hadn't attacked



KOK KNIGHTS



likewise and each has their own speciality. They all have exotic names – Manchu Man, Dan Fists, Macho Mike, Bamboo Man, Killa Kale – a referencce to System 3's boss Mark Kale – Daddy Kale and BB Butler. There's also Siam Sally. Don't be fooled. She's a Miss with a deadly hit. And beware if she blows you a kiss. Her smacker puts you off guard and makes you wobble.

There's even a curvy cutie who minces wonderfully between bouts.

During the fight you and your opponent's endurance and punch power are measured. Certain moves – such as kicks – weaken you more than others. The winner of each fight is the first to three knock-downs.

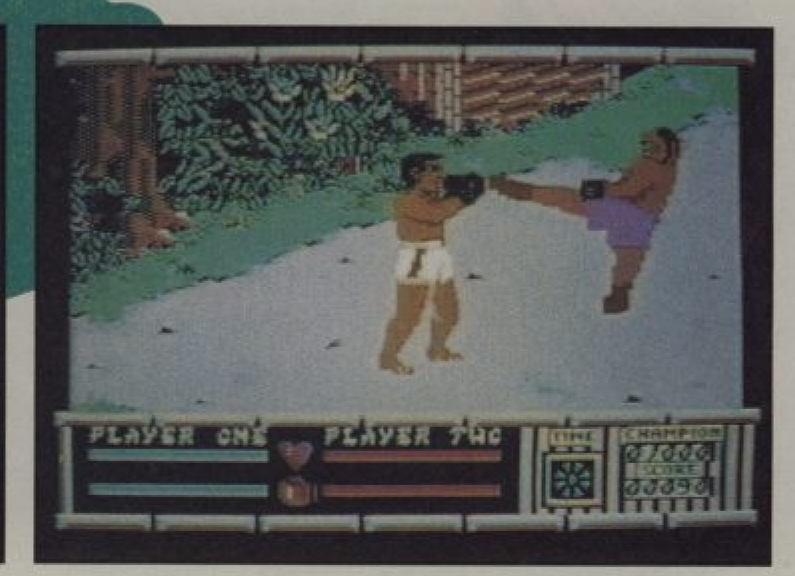
The animation is superb and silky smooth and the music – by Rob Hubbard – is wonderful.

Why not be clever this Christmas and have a knees-up, high-kicking, punch-drunk Christmas box.

▶ GRAPHICS	10
▶ SOUND	9
▶ VALUE	9
▶ PLAYABILITY	10







IS

the planet of Octapolis for centuries. To space pilots it was just a black spot on the space map, the Zone of the Evil Eye, as they called it.

No one even dared to talk about Octapolis any more, but in the deep secrecy of the Galactic Intelligence Agency (GIA) a most cruel and desperate series of experiments was carried out.

They kidnapped innocent space pilots, and sent them inside the zone, and hoped that somehow, somewhere, they could find one who was immune to the immense mental power of Octapolis.

If they could only reduce it just a little, then a gallant battle cruiser could get close enough to wipe out the planet. It took the GIA 200 years to find such a pilot – you are that pilot!!

Once the game has loaded and Wally Beben's rocky soundtrack is pulsing away you see the split screen shoot 'em up screen. The top half shows a side view of your ship and the alien attackers the bottom half shows a birds eye view of your ship and the city.

Doesn't matter which part of the screen you use to blast away at your attackers – but you'll need to use the bottom part of the split screen to line your ship up over the landing field, *Uridium* style, when the time comes.

You don't need to keep your finger on the fire button as blasting is automatic. But hold down the fire button to control the ship in the lower half of the screen.

Score enough points and an alarm sounds which tells you you can land – but it's a good idea to stick around building up points until you've got an extra life. You'll need it in the city sections which follow.

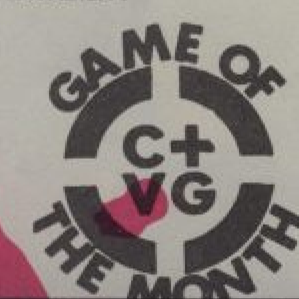
Once inside the city you're view changes to a platform style screen – with each of the five city levels inhabited by various nasties, including those giant monsters and E.T. lookalikes.

Here you control a small laser armed spaceman who jumps and dodges and zaps his way through the hazards.

Survive the five city screens and then it's back into the ship for another zapping session. And so it goes.

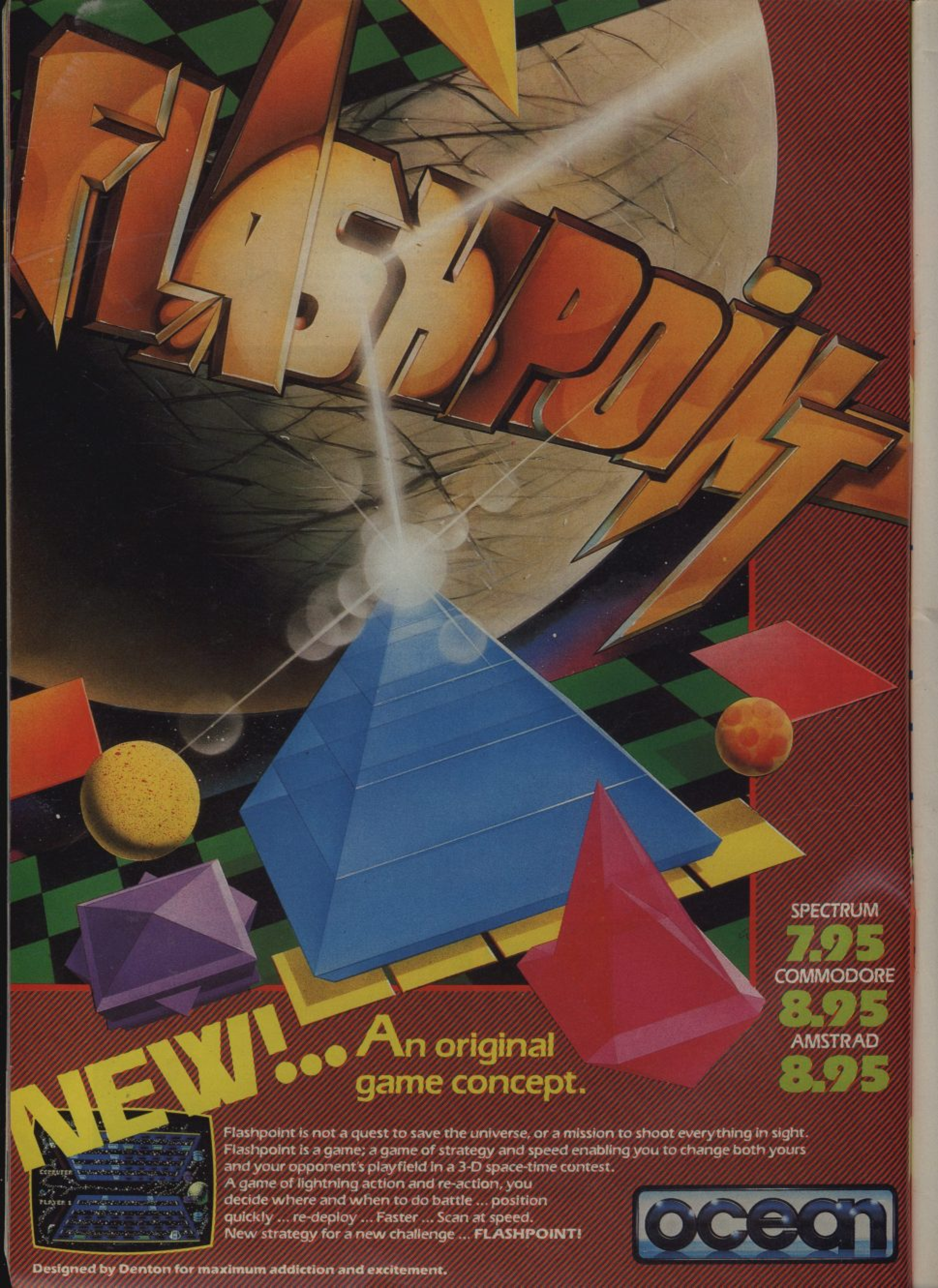
I have to say that I found the flying bits had the edge over the platform screens – but as a whole the game is just brilliant fun! Get it today.

▶ GRAPHICS	9
▶ SOUND	9
▶ VALUE	9
▶ PLAYABILITY	9

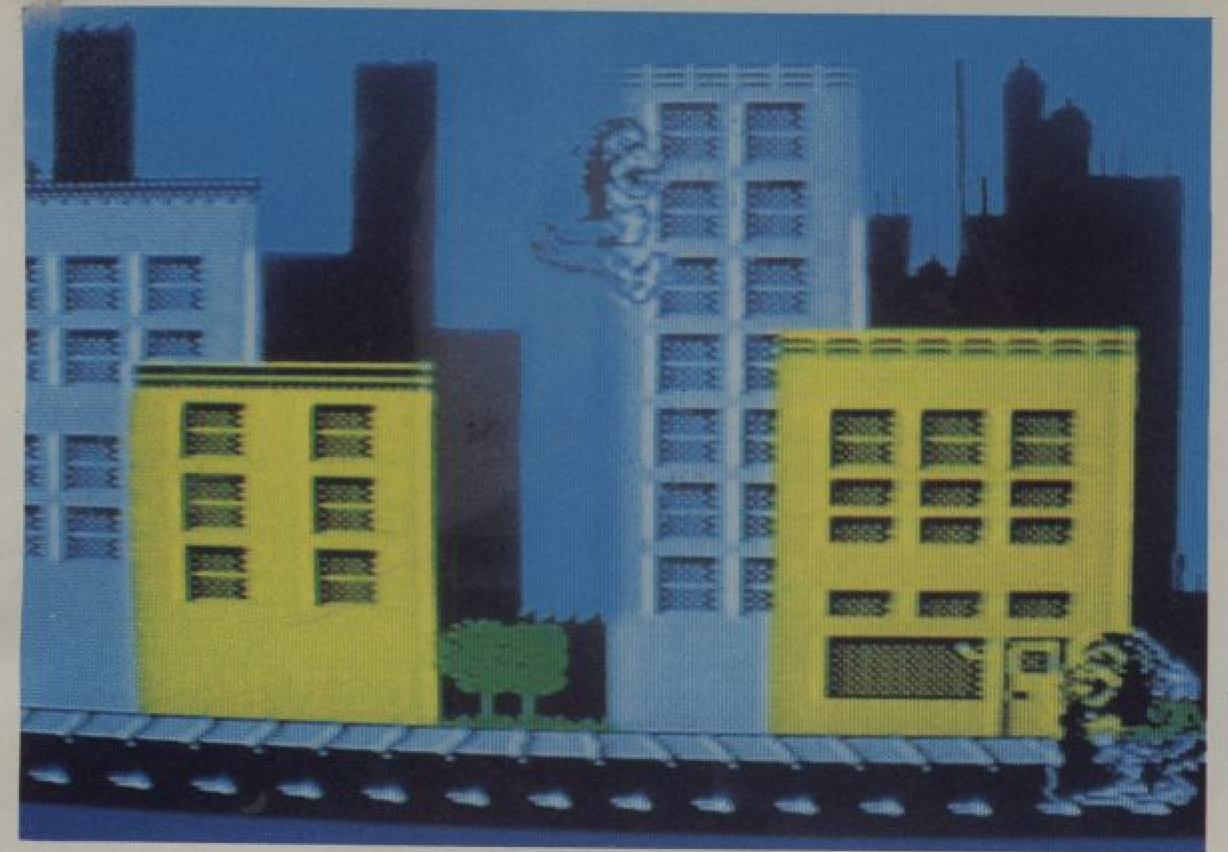







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3



RAMPAGE

- MACHINES: C64/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD/ATARI ST/ATARI XE/XL
- SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION
- PRICE: £9.99 (TAPES), £12.99 (AMS DISK), £14.99 (ST), £12.99 (64 DISK)
- VERSION TESTED: C64
- REVIEWER: TIM

Prepare yourself for a monster mash! Or should that be smash! *Rampage*, the cult arcade classic, has finally hit the streets. I must admit to being among those people who said "Nah, it can never be done!" Well it's eat my words, hat, or whatever else comes to hand time. Activision has produced a very acceptable version of the game – complete with three player option.

The basic idea is VERY simple. You control one of three monsters – Lizzie, a Godzilla type reptile, the Wolf Man and a King Kong Gorilla monster and then you go on the rampage, smashing buildings, crushing tanks, knocking helicopters out of the sky and generally have smashing time.

The best way to play is with two or three friends – that way you discover the true competitive spirit of the game! It's almost as much fun kicking and punching your monster mates as it is destroying buildings and mashing tanks!

Eating people isn't wrong in *Rampage* – your monster will need to snatch a person burger from time to time. These people appear at the windows of the apartment blocks and skyscrapers you're attempting to demolish. Just grab them and munch them for some extra energy. Yummy!

There are 85 cities to smash, kick and crush your way through – the background graphics give you an idea where you are but the buildings you damage look much the same wherever you are.

Controls are via joystick and keyboard – and I found the stick somewhat unresponsive at times. When I wanted to smash something I just couldn't get my monster to do what I wanted.

The graphics and animation are pretty good copies of the coin-op original, even down to the daft expressions on the monsters' faces. They look out of the screen and mouth comments at you. Glad I can't make them out!

Sound effects are nifty too – sort of digitised sounding crashes thumps and grunts. Quite original this. There is an intro tune copied from the coin-op.

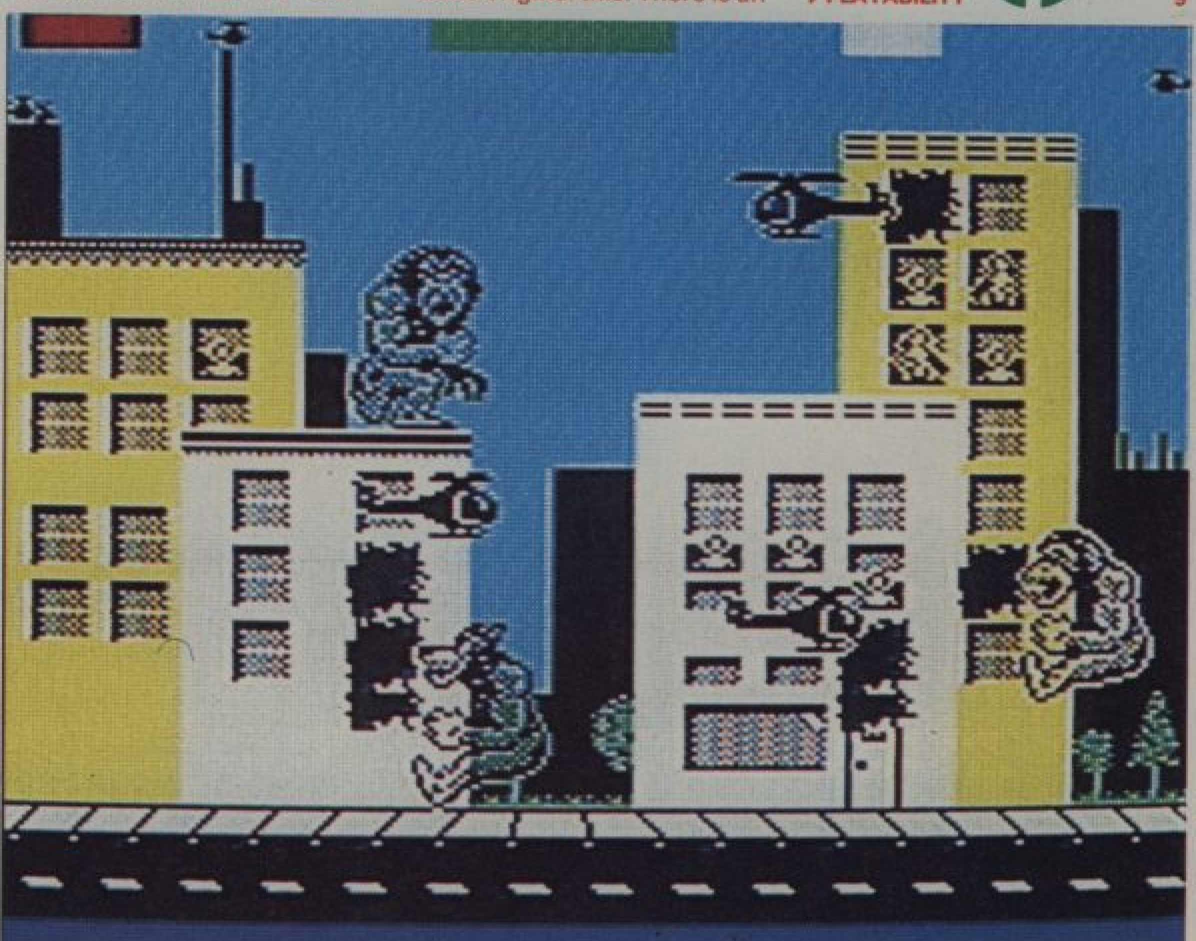
Each player can choose which monster he wants to be – so you could get three Lizzie's running around, if you want – Lizzie is my favourite as you might have guessed.

The only thing I'm not quite sure about is the game's lastability. It's fun to play for a while but whether you'll want to batter your way through all 85 cities is another question.

Overall, *Rampage* is a fun game – if you're a fan of the coin op then you won't be disappointed by the 64 version at least! We'll let you know about the other versions when we see them.

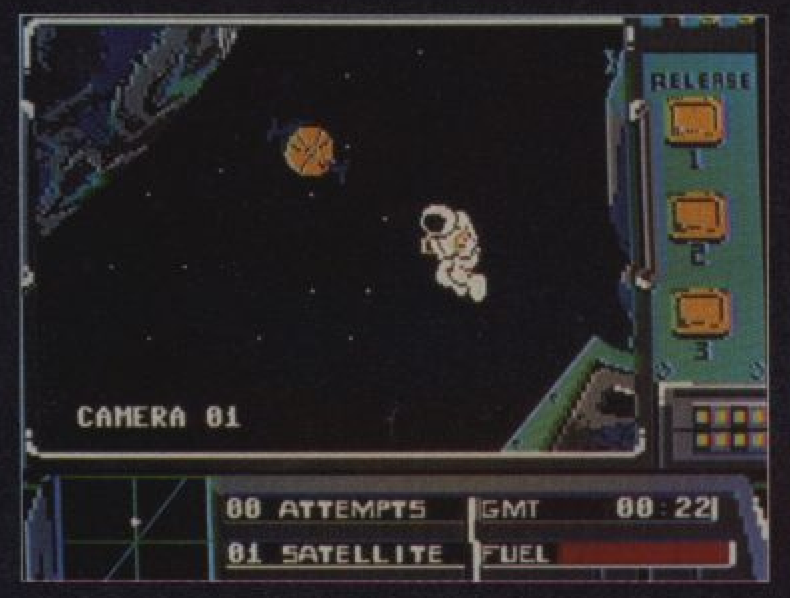
GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	9
VALUE	8
PLAYABILITY	9



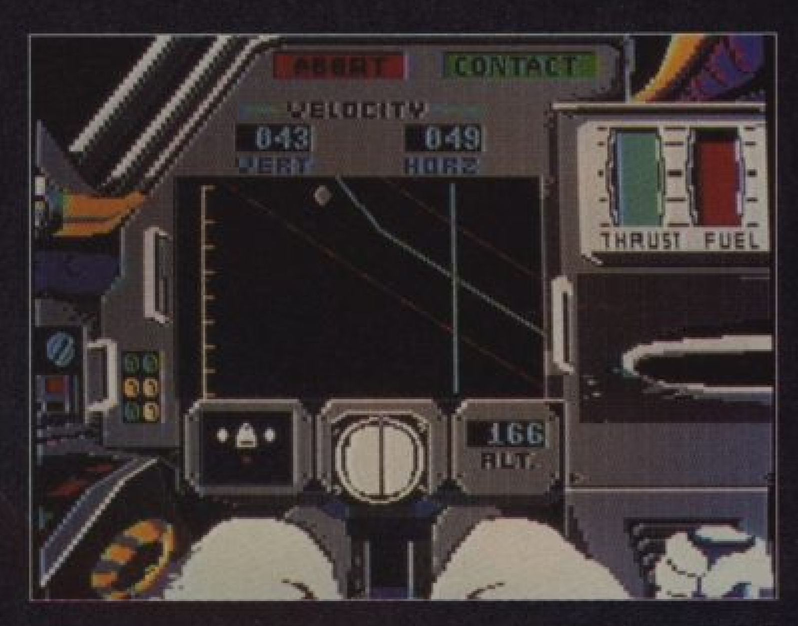


APOLLO 18 TEST DRI

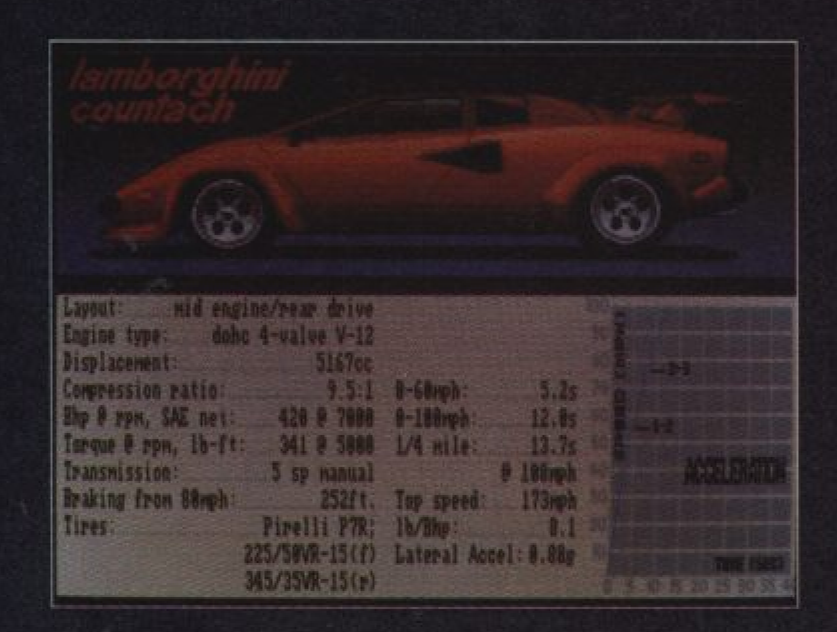
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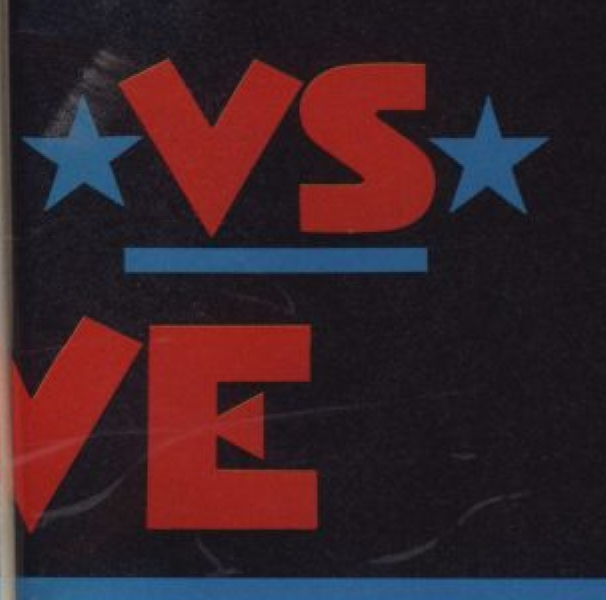


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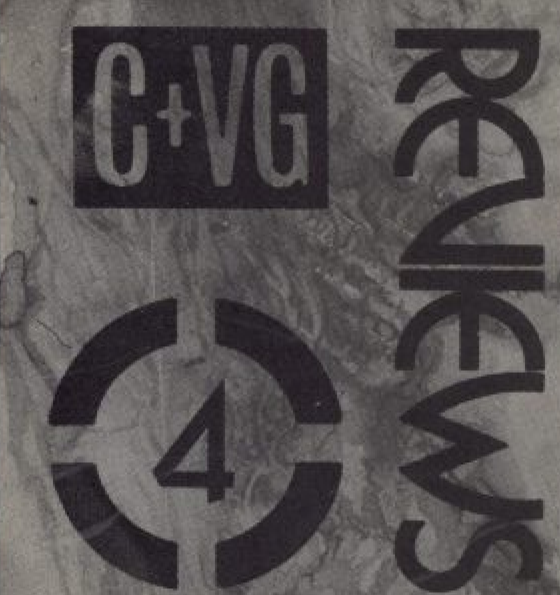


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JACKAL

- MACHINES: SPECTRUM/CBM 64/ AMSTRAD/ATARI
- SUPPLIER: KONAMI
- PRICE: £7.95 (SPECTRUM), £8.95 (CBM AND ATARI CAS/DISK)
- VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM/ AMSTRAD
- REVIEWER: PAUL

Konami had a really nice arcade coin-op with *Jackal*. It must have seemed a great idea to convert to the home computer. A sure-fire hit. So what happened?

Okay, we know that any coin-op's graphics and sound suffer a little in the transition to the home micro, but this is ridiculous. *Jackal* on the Spectrum is in a sorry old state. And the Amstrad isn't much better.

It even pips that other Konami disaster, *Jailbreak*, in the dire game stakes.

The graphics are naff and the sound – apart from an annoying little tune which plays over the controls selection – is non-existent.

Once again this game is about rescuing prisoners captured by the enemy. The rescue plan is codenamed Jackal and involves you rescuing the POW and dropping them off at various locations to be rescued by helicopter. You control, what is supposed to be a jeep. It looks more like a box to me. It's mounted with a machine gun which appears to fire spasmodically. Grenades, missiles – short and long range – and starburst missiles can be picked up after certain huts have been attacked and the occupant picked up.

And that's it.

I just hope the other versions turn out better than this offering. So far the only Konami game which we can give the thumbs up to is *Nemesis*. Of course, other software houses have converted Konami titles with much greater success.

Ironic, isn't it?

KONAMI KONAMI

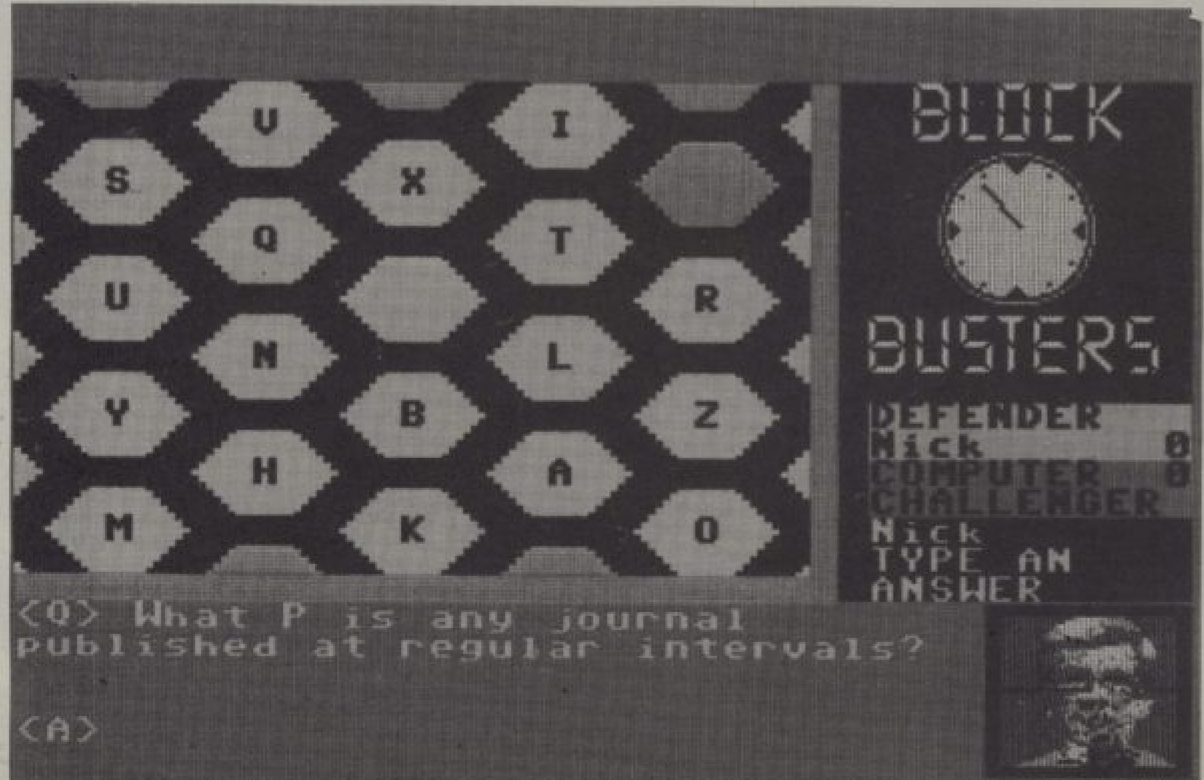
	SP	AM
GRAPHICS	5	5
SOUND	2	3
VALUE	4	4
PLAYABILITY	5	5

BLOCK BUSTERS

- MACHINE: CBM 64
- SUPPLIER: TV GAMES
- PRICE: £7.95
- VERSION TESTED: CBM 64
- REVIEWER: PAUL

The Trivial Pursuit boys, Domark, have done it again on the quiz front with *Blockbusters* on their new TV Games label. All that's missing from the game are the fabulous prizes that are given away on television.

I must admit I had my doubts about this and the other games in the series – *The Krypton Factor, Treasure Hunt, Countdown* and *Bullseye*. But if the others are as good as *Blockbusters*, then they all should be worth checking out.



The game faithfully follows the format of the programme. Even presenter Bob Holness has been digitised and nods enthusiastically if you get an answer right, shakes his head if you were wrong.

The playing area is a hexagon matrix. Player One must form a chain of linked hexagon from, say, left to right, while player two tries to link top to bottom. Each player selects letters which are in the hexagons.

For example, a V question might be: "What V is a raptorial bird with a naked head and neck?" The first player to hit their button gets to answer. Get it wrong and your opponent has a chance. (The answer is Vulture). The person who gets the answer when captures the hexagon.

The computer decides who presses their button first, so it's all fair and square. There's no cheating.

You play the best of three games and the winner gets to go for the Gold Run, in which you are given 45 seconds to answer enough questions to cross the board.

There are various skill levels and enough questions to stop the game becoming repetitious.

If you like the programme and quiz games in general, you'll find this one of the best.

Right back to the game. "Can I have a V, please, Bob . . ."



GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
VALUE	9
PLAYABILITY	10

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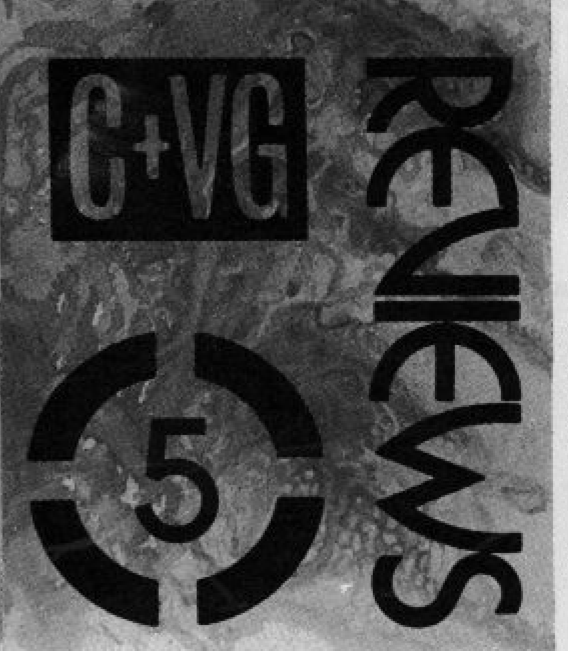
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DRILLER

- MACHINES: C64/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD
- SUPPLIER: INCENTIVE
- PRICE: £14.95 (CASS) £17.95 DISK
- REVIEWER: IAN

Incentive. Curious word that. It means something inciting or encouraging to action, especially to increase output. And that's just what Incentive's new and latest game *Driller* does.

It raises the blood pressure and gets the adrenalin coursing through your body. *Driller's* astounding 3D solid vector graphics and amazing realism are brought together in this truly original space arcade adventure. This is the best game Incentive has produced for a long time – and I mean a long, long time.

Driller features an all new 3D graphic environment called Freescape. This allows the player to move to any point in three dimensional space, look in any direction and see the view as if he was actually there.

Each three dimensional building or object can have a different texture and shade of colour. This quality gives a much better look and feel to the game, and enhances all the visual aspects with a sense of high adventure.

Due to the advanced compression techniques used *Driller* has over 20,000 billion screens which are brought together, via the unique re-drawing technique used, you can hardly notice it!

Your overall mission is to make safe each of the 18 sectors of your moons surface, by positioning a drilling rig over suspected gas pockets in each of the sectors. Big job!

You have two forms of transport under your control. An Excavation Probe which you use to place the drilling rigs wherever you see fit. The other is a Reconnaissance Jet which you can use to scour the moon before venturing out in your in the Excavation Probe. It's a lot faster!

Each vehicle is equipped with a high intensity, high frequency quadruple dual action lasers, shields and high amounts of energy reserves. While on your travels you will encounter various planetary defence systems which include laser beacons and scanners.

The laser beacons are positioned throughout the moon. If you are detected within range of a laser beacon you will be attacked. Laser beacons fire highly damaging lasers – and they never miss! Scanners are different, these are tiny ships which orbit the moon and attack from above.

Whatever transport you are using, your lasers, shield, light and motion are all dependent on Rubicon crystals. Time and use will gradually decrease your stores of energy, this is shown by a horizontal bar graph, with length proportional to your existing supplies of sheilds and energy.

Extra Rubicon crystals can be located within small shed like buildings, scattered about on the moon's surface, and can be consumed via the lasers.

The lasers are essential for destroying outlawed defence systems and also for operating switches and levers, and for solving puzzles. These have to be used correctly in order to achieve access to other buildings and sectors.

There is a dark and light side of the moon, and both have hazards and dangers which hinder your every move. The dark side is a lot more hazardous than the light, so it is wise to solve the light side first.

Movement is controlled via the joystick and keyboard. The joystick is used to move your current form of transport in all of the usual eight directions.

For the Excavation Probe only, there are a few extra, keyboard controls, with which you can tilt left and right slightly, look up and down (this is handy for spotting attacking Scanners). Rise and fall vertically permits you to peer over high walls and the like. U-turn, increase, decrease step size (allows longer or shorter distances moved between each step) and increase, decrease rotation angle.

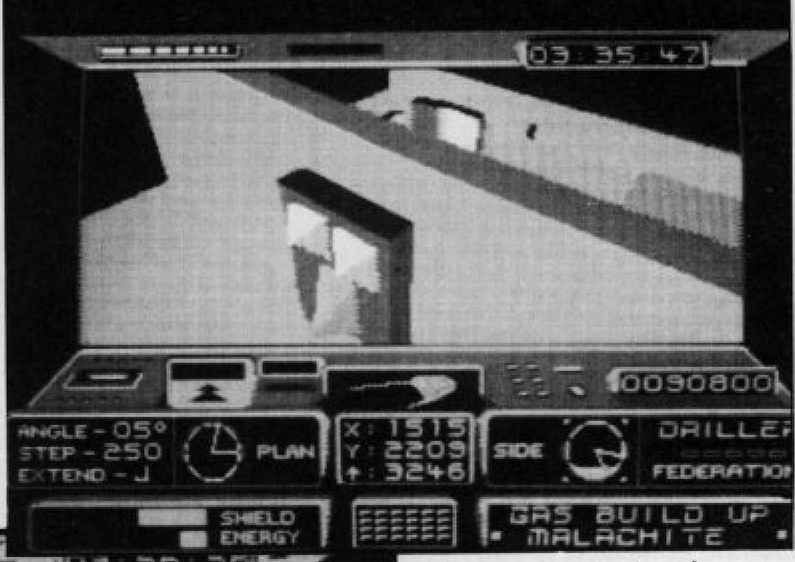


The screen consists of several windows, each showing the user a different piece of information. The main window shows the view from the cockpit of your current vehicle, this is where all the action is.

If the 'I' key is pressed at any time during the game, an information screen will appear in the main window. This shows you which sector you are on, how much gas was found and tapped, total amount of safe sectors and also a load and save option.

Driller is definitely one of the best arcade adventure games to have hit the streets for ages. There is nothing I can say to downgrade this excellent piece of software even if I tried! *Driller* brings together all the magical ingredients that make a game stand out amongst the rest, such as astounding visuals, high adventure and compulsive gameplay.

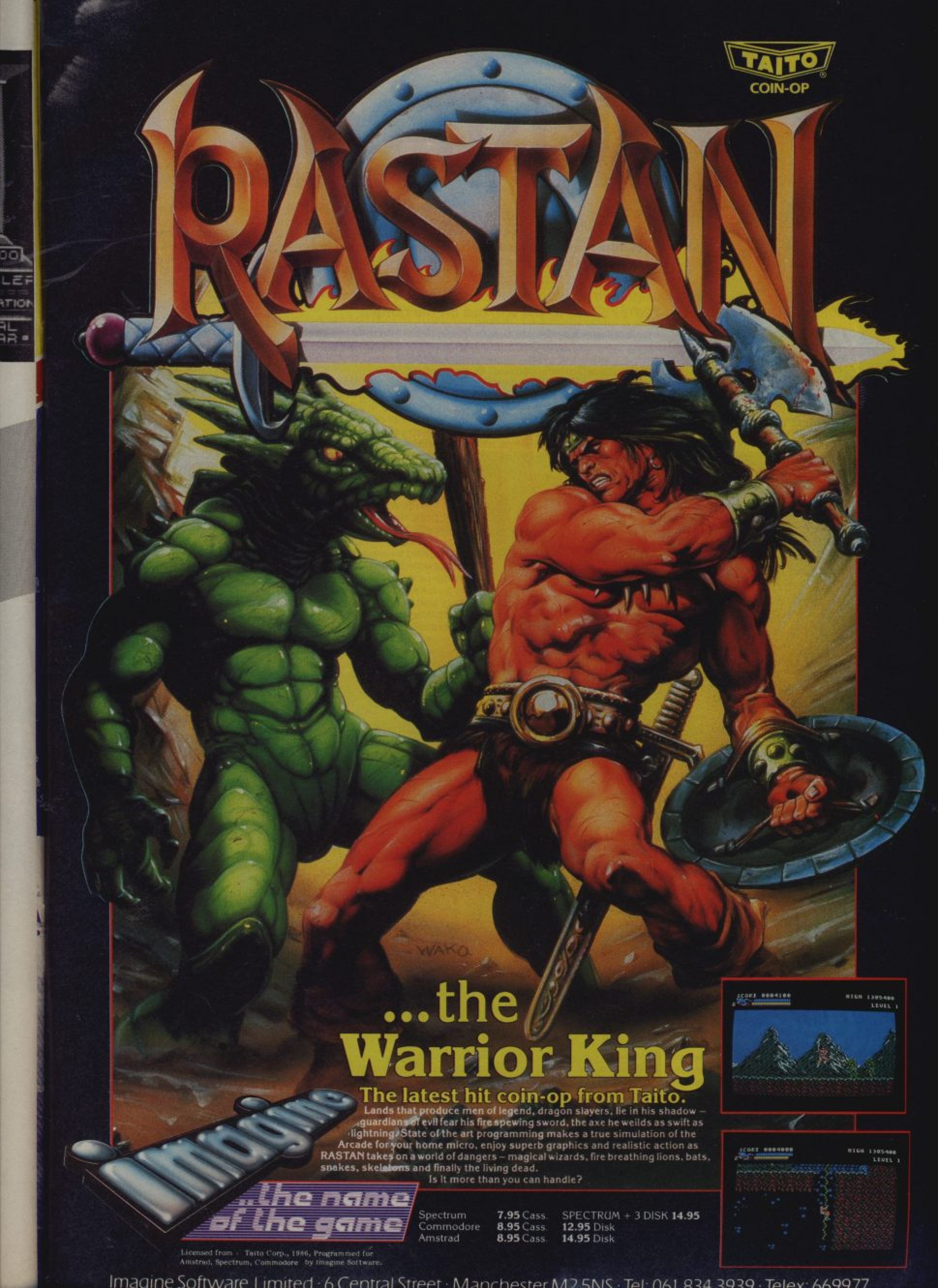
Driller is packaged with a 30 plus page operations manual, a 3D mapping model and a novella. All of this comes in an impressive illustrated cardboard box. All versions are £15 each, so it may be a good idea if you talk someone into buying it for you for Christmas, and then, buy another cheaper game with your own dosh. Simple, eh?



One more thing, the C64 version has a superb soundtrack written by Matt Gray. Reserve your copy of *Driller* today before they're all sold out!

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	9
VALUE	8
PLAYABILITY	8




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SKATE OR DIE

The battle of the US giants is on – and the battlefield is your local skateboard park. Electronic Arts and US Gold have both released skateboard games. US Gold have the conversion of the brilliant Atari arcade game *720°* while EA have an original multi-load game called Skate or Die. Will *720°* or *Skate or Die* win out on the ramps.

720°

- MACHINE: C64/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD/ST
- SUPPLIER: US GOLD
- PRICES: £8.99 (SPECTRUM) £9.99 (C64/AMS) £11.95 (64 DISC)* £14.99 (AMS DISC)
- VERSIONS TESTED: AMSTRAD/SPECTRUM
- REVIEWER: TIM

▲ SKATE OR DIE/C64

This game is named after the most difficult move in skateboarding and is a brilliant coin-op. Have the computer conversions captured the spirit of the arcade game?

Well, I'm sorry to have to say that the versions we've seen don't quite cut it. The graphics and sound on the Spectrum/Amstrad versions are OK but the gameplay seems to be slightly laid back – no real urgency is injected into the action – unlike the coin-op.

720° is set in Skate City and you play the part of a likely lad aiming to become the king of the streets. You have to earn extra cash to buy more radical skate-gear by competing in the various competitions held in skate parks.

Competitions like the slalom park, the jump park, the ramp park, or the simple downhill park. But to get in you need tickets and to earn tickets you have to pick up money which, oddly enough, litters the streets of Skate City.

The main currency here is skill on the board and not the folding green stuff it seems.

You begin with three tickets which allow you access to the parks. Travel to them through the busy streets of skate city – dodging muscle men, cyclists and odd folk piloting those one wheeled bike thingies.

You have a limited time to reach each park before the killer bees appear. Killer bees? Yup, these insects are the scourge of Skate City they chase you – and if you don't make the park before they get you, it's the end of the road.

Not so difficult in the earlier stages of the game when you've still got tickets – but if you've not got enough cash to buy a ticket and the bees are after you the doormen at the park entrances aren't at all sympathetic!

So, like your mum always tells you, be careful with your cash. It's not so much good buying all that flash skateboard gear when you can't afford a ticket to the park is it?

But when you have got enough pennies for both here's a run down on what the extra equipment will do for you.

Shoes let you jump higher, knee-pads help you recover from a fall more quickly, a new board makes you faster on the streets and a new helmet helps you become more adventurous on the ramps. These items can be purchased from any of the skate shops dotted around Skate City.

Control of the board is fairly easy – easier than *Skate or Die*, that's for sure. But it doesn't give you much of a feel of being on a board – much too stable for a start!

The park sequences are again fairly straightforward – and after 20 levels of basically the same thing I reckon that you might find the appeal of the game wearing a bit thin.





▲ 720°/AMSTRAD

I've only seen the Speccy and Amstrad versions so far – the Amstrad has the edge on graphics, but there's hardly any sound on either version. The C64 demo I saw wasn't playable.

	720° AMS	SPEC
▶ GRAPHICS	7	7
▶ SOUND	6	6
▶ VALUE	7	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	8	8



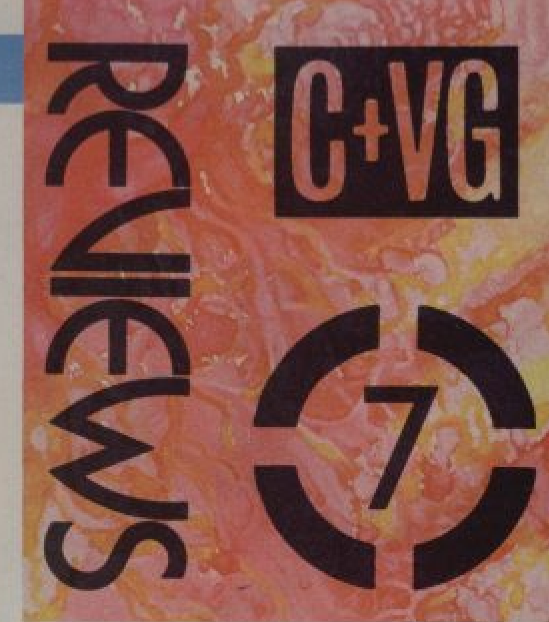
▲ SKATE OR DIE/C64

Skate Or Die

- MACHINE: C64
- SUPPLIER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
- PRICE: £9.95 (TAPE) £14.95 (DISC)
- REVIEWER: TIM

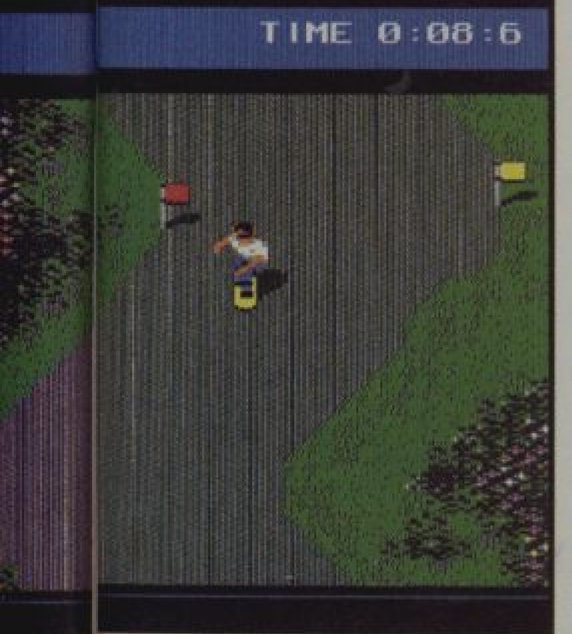
Now, we've only seen the 64 version, so it may be a bit unfair

E & 720°



to compare the two games. But I reckon that if you're a skateboarder and not a coin-op player – there MUST be a few of you around – you're going to find the *Skate or Die* is a more accurate representation of your sport.

Graphics, sound and animation are excellent – although the whole thing is let down by the incredibly slow loading time on the disc version I played.



△ SKATE OR DIE/AMSTRAD

The game starts in the skate shop where you can choose your board and decide if you want to practise or go for broke and play all the events. Here you'll get your first glimpse of Rodney, the aging punk owner of the shop – what a state to be in!

Then it's out on the streets where you choose which event you want to compete in by simply skating down the street with the name of the event spraypainted on it.

There are five events that you can skate individually, or in sequence with "Compete All" But you have to have two joysticks to "Compete All" against a buddy. If you don't have a buddy, there's always Lester the computer player.

● **Freestyle Ramp**: There's a hundred feet of wood and steel, curved into a wide and smooth U-shape just waiting for someone like you to pop some incredible moves. You start on the left platform, aching to boogie. Move the controller forward or back to choose your entry position.

After you drop in, you'll have ten passes through the ramp, executing tricks at the left, right, or both ends. As you make a pass, click the button in the pump zones to increase your speed and to select a particular trick. You'll also need to lean the controller either *into* the direction you're going or *away from* the direction you're going.

Over-the-channel aerials score big, as does executing a wide range of tricks end to end.

● **High Jump**: Sheer guts event. Go fast to get high. While you're in the ramp, move the controller rapidly in any direction to build speed – but you can take a breather while you're in the air if you want. You get a maximum of five passes on the *right* side where the height marker is. Of course, you don't have to wait all five passes. To actually go for it and record the attempt, click the button *at the highest point* of your jump.

● **Downhill Race**: Race against time and collect bonuses along the way. Skate under, through, on top of, over, and along any number of "opportunities". Pick your own style of controls on this one. Regular foot means pulling the controller back moves you down-hill, controller forward makes you slow or stop. Goofy foot means you control the skater as if you're on the board.

● **Downhill Jam**: Inner city, back alley blazin'. Pop soda cans, mash trash cans, bust a few bottles, crash flower pots and, hey, why not each other! You fight time and your buddy (if you ain't got one, we supply Lester) to reach the main street first. Careful though, there's a reception party waiting. The controls are like Downhill Race, with regular and goofy foot options available. Click and lean *into the direction you're facing* to punch, either high, middle or low.



△ 720°/AMSTRAD

● **Pool Joust**: An empty pool, a sunny day, and a boffing stick. Rules are simple. Two go in, one comes out. It's a rad new twist on the game of tag. You get five passes to get your opponent, then he takes the boffin stick and the tables are turned – you're *it*. First one to get three slams on the other guy wins, *but* you gotta win by two.

My fave events are the Jam and the Downhill – but the others are just as much fun.

Great sound effects and driving Rob Hubbard intro tune make *Skate or Die* a real must for skate-boarders.

Overall if I was a 64 owner I'd go for *Skate or Die* if I wanted realism – 720° if I was a fan of the arcade game. Can't really say about the other versions – but I doubt if the excitement and presentation of *Skate or Die* could be repeated as effectively on the Spectrum and Amstrad.

▸ GRAPHICS	10
▸ SOUND	9
▸ VALUE	9
▸ PLAYABILITY	9



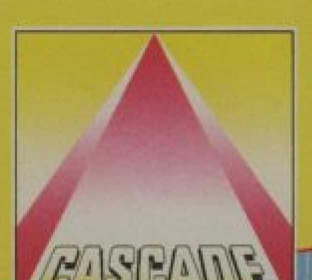




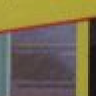
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SLAINE

▶ MACHINES: C64/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD
▶ SUPPLIER: MARTECH
▶ PRICES:
▶ VERSIONS TESTED: SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD
▶ REVIEWER: TIM

He's here! The axe-wielding barbarian called *Slaine* is about to hack, slash n' slay his way through a very original adventure game.

I say adventure – but *Slaine* isn't like any other adventure you've ever played, it isn't like any arcade adventure you seen – in fact it isn't quite like any game you've ever seen.

It uses a new interactive system called *Reflex* which sets out to reproduce the way random thoughts flash through your mind – and how you grab these thoughts and turn them into actions.

Not quite sure if the system is as fine tuned as it should be yet – but it doesn't take anything away from the originality of this game – based on the cult comic hero from *2000AD*.

But first let's take a look at the story behind the game. The peace of the village of Tautega has been shattered by the death of the Star Seer, Cas Wallen.

A reclusive Drune – a sort of wizard – who lived in the Sky Tower, was blamed for the Seer's death and as punishment was locked in his own fortress by the villagers. The Drune's daughter, Reya, freed her bad old dad – and to show his appreciation he entombed her in the tower! Why? Because Reya could destroy him by revealing his name to the villagers. Nice guy this Drune!

And to prove it he set about taking his revenge on the villagers who had imprisoned him, laying waste to the land.

The Drune went too far and was killed during his frenzy of revenge. But before he died he uttered a curse which brought perpetual night to the land. The people buried the Drune inside a stone circle under an unmarked gravestone.

That's where the unwitting Slaine comes in. He gets caught up in a quest to bring light back to the land, and rescue the Drune's daughter.

Load in the game and you see a different sort of screen layout. On the Spectrum version the left hand side of the screen is taken up by the "brain" window, where random thoughts and possible actions scroll back and forth. Two small "hand" icons, representing *Slaine* and his smelly sidekick, Ukko the dwarf, are used to "grab" these thoughts in any combination the player thinks fit.

Basically you get a sort of control menu which opens out other possible actions or options as you play the game.

Catching the correct option can sometimes be irritating and frustrating – but the further you get into the game the easier this control system becomes.

At the top right of the screen is a large scroll which gives you basic information about your current location. Below that comic style graphic windows or text windows open as you play – giving you pictures of the characters and or locations plus any relevant text info.

These graphics, created by the Creative Reality team, are excellent – capturing the feel of the comic hero and the atmosphere of the land he inhabits.

As you explore you learn more about the land and the quest which *Slaine* finds himself drawn into. The packaging doesn't give much away about what you actually have to do – but learning is all part of the appeal of this game.

Meanwhile, back at the "brain" window – you can put together some quite complicated actions using the menu style parser – such as; "drop the coins and give the axe to Ukko, or "open the chest and look into it". But as I've said before, it takes a bit of practice to master the system.

The Amstrad version has a different screen layout with two "brain" windows, which makes things even more complicated. I preferred the Spectrum version because of this.

To help you know if you've positioned your "hand" correctly over a "thought" the word shimmers and vanishes if you've hit it just right.

Slaine uses a *Dungeons and Dragons* style combat system of hit points – but you still have to use the "brain" window to control Slaine's actions. You can make him punch, kick, throw an axe and so on. Use the scroll at the top of the screen as a guide to see what you should go for next as it tells you what your opponents are up to, and how much damage they've inflicted on you.

You can also send Slaine into a warp spasm – a sort of ancient smart bomb! – and he'll wipe out anything he can lay his axe on. But you have to have enough "warp points" to accomplish this. How these are earned I'm not quite sure – but resting seems to help!

Overall *Slaine* is a brave attempt at trying something new. However at times I felt the Reflex system was stopping me getting to the meat of the game – it looks to have real depth of gameplay.

But I will be going back for more adventures with our mean and muscle-bound barbarian. *Slaine* has a real addictive quality that most ordinary adventures just don't have – in fact you could say that it refreshes the parts that other games just can't reach.

C+VG HIT!

	SPEC	AMS
▶ GRAPHICS	9	9
▶ SOUND	6	6
▶ VALUE	9	9
▶ PLAYABILITY	8	8





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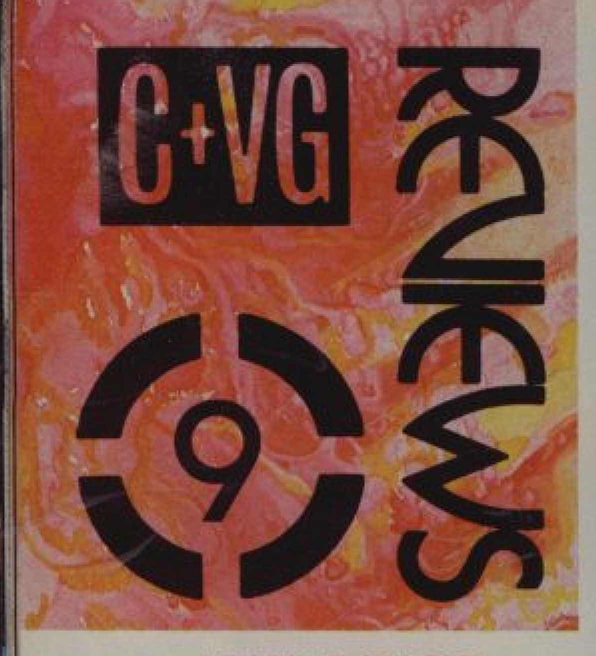
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- VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
- REVIEWER: PAUL

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Well, now we've got that straight it's on to some tough training in the *Combat School*, Ocean's conversion of the excellent Konami coin-op before undertaking a dangerous mission to rescue a hostage at the American embassy.

There are eight training courses to conquer. Points and time bonuses are up for grabs.

● ASSAULT COURSE: By waggling the joystick, you must build-up and maintain your running speed while jumping over the numerous fences. Towards the end of this event you will be confronted with a horizontal ladder; jump onto this ladder and waggle as fast as possible to complete this course. You are up against the clock.

● FIRING RANGE ONE: Various targets appear at random throughout this event and you must move your cursor and shoot as many as possible within the allotted time. You have a minimum number of targets to hit.

● IRON MAN RACE: You must build-up and maintain your maximum running speed whilst avoiding the various obstacles such as rocks and mines, as you try and negotiate the terrain.

● FIRING RANGE TWO: In contrast to the fixed gun emplacements you had in the first firing range, this event presents you with a chance to practice your skills with a hand-held machine gun. Robot tanks descend at random from the top of the screen and you must knock-out as many as possible in the allotted time.

● ARM WRESTLING: You must try and build-up and maintain maximum power to defeat your opponent. In the one player game you will be pitted against the computer, while in the two player game you'll be competing one on one.

● FIRING RANGE THREE: This is similar in control to the first firing range, but you must avoid shooting any of the red targets. If you do inadvertantly hit one of these, your cursor will freeze until the next batch of targets appear.

● COMBAT WITH INSTRUCTOR: Here you are one on one against your instructor and must use all your martial arts and combat skills to defeat him.

● CHIN-UPS: If you fail to qualify in the first six events by a very narrow margin, you will be given a second chance to continue. This will take the form of a number of chin-ups that need to be performed in a specific time.

It's then time for the mission. . .

Combat School combines all the ingredients that make the coin-op so successful. The training events are highly-playable but I wasn't too impressed with the final mission.

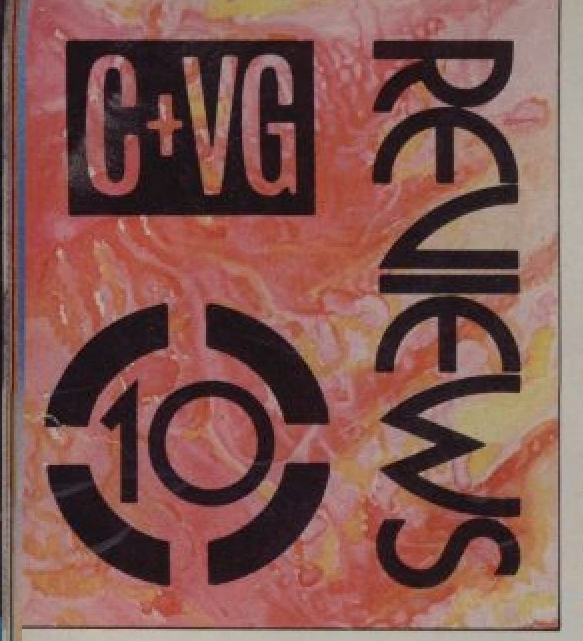


GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	6
VALUE	8
PLAYABILITY	8


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ZARCH

- MACHINE: ARCHIMEDES
- SUPPLIER: SUPERIOR SOFTWARE
- PRICE: £19.95
- VERSION TESTED: ARCHIMEDES
- REVIEWER: DAVID

You may well have been wondering what the co-authors of Elite have been doing in between counting up all their lovely lolly. Well one of the duo, David Braben, has spent the last few months developing the first ever game for Acorn's new super-computer, the Archimedes.

Entitled *Zarch*, it is a mixture of arcade and strategy rolled into an absolute hum-dinger of a game that will probably sell as many Archimedes systems as *Star Raiders* did Atari 400s back in 1981.

You are the pilot of a *Zarch* hoverplane, with orders to save your planet from infestation by a deadly red virus being sprayed over the countryside by waves of marauding aliens.

The game contains a three dimensional, sculptured landscape, complete with hills, lakes, trees, and other landmarks. The action elevation actually changes as your plane gains – or loses altitude.

Flight control is via the Archie's three buttoned mouse. Actually manoeuvring the plane is not at all easy, and is based on the principle of a 'central mouse position'. The direction and distance you move the mouse away from this central position, determines the 'compass direction' the plane will face, and its declination (angle of dip) to the ground.

By combining these controls with the thrust button (left hand mouse button), the plane can be flown at any speed, at any angle, in any direction. . . quite a handful!

As you press the thrust button, a beautiful plume of matter spurts out the back of your plane, and is left hanging in space like a three dimensional wake. Alien ships each have their own plumes, but such is the power of the Archimedes, that the smoothness of the animation of each individual matter particle doesn't even flicker when the processor is called upon to handle a number of planes concurrently.

The arcade elements of the game involve you in mid-air skirmishes and dog-fights with various brands of alien, some innocuous, others highly dangerous, although you won't even defeat the softest of opponents until you've mastered the flight controls.

Alien planes come in six varieties: Seeders, Drones, Mutants (mutated Drones), Bombers, Pests, and Fighters. Each have their own role in the general scheme of things. Some, like Pests and Fighters, concentrate on blowing you into oblivion, while others, such as Seeders, fly around spraying the landscape with the virus, always on the lookout for a suitable place to land so they can contaminate yet more of the countryside.

To combat the aliens, your plane is equipped with short and long range scanners, a laser cannon, and a limited supply of smart bomb and homing missiles.

If you succeed in knocking off the first set of Aliens, another wave appears in their place, and so on. Luckily, in between each wave the land is cleansed. A bonus is awarded for each sector of ground left uncontaminated at the end of a wave, and herein lies the strategic element of the game.

In order to get a good score, you must wipe out the enemy as clinically as possible. This cannot be achieved by merely flying around aimlessly, blasting anything unlucky enough to cross your path; although, as with all the best arcade/strategy games, *Zarch* can be played quite satisfactorily on this level.

No, the way to impress all your friends (if owning an Archimedes hasn't done that already!), is to attack selectively, based on what type of alien does what. For example, fighters don't spread the virus, so leave them for the moment and concentrate on Seeders and Bombers; they're the ones spraying the countryside red! Each type of alien appears as a different coloured blip on the scanner, so you should get used to recognising what's going on around you.

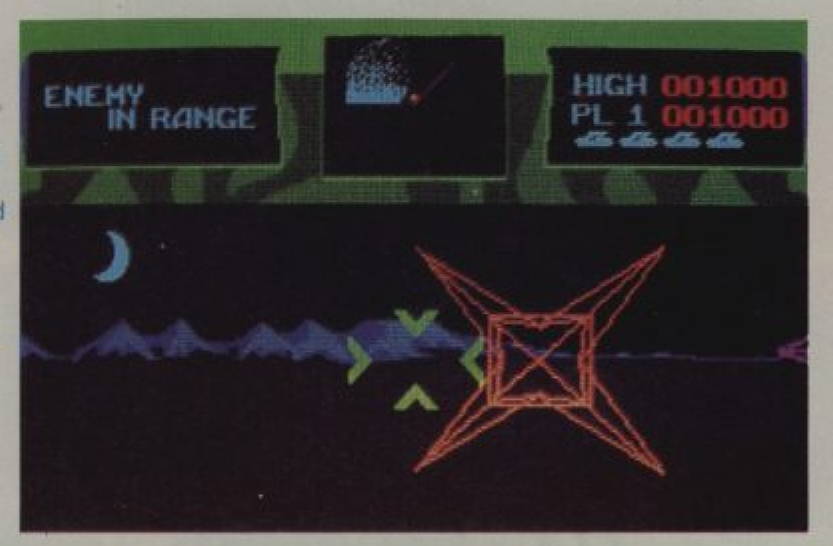
Zarch prompts one to reel off a string of superlatives. In the graphics and animation departments, it is head and shoulders above all its rivals.

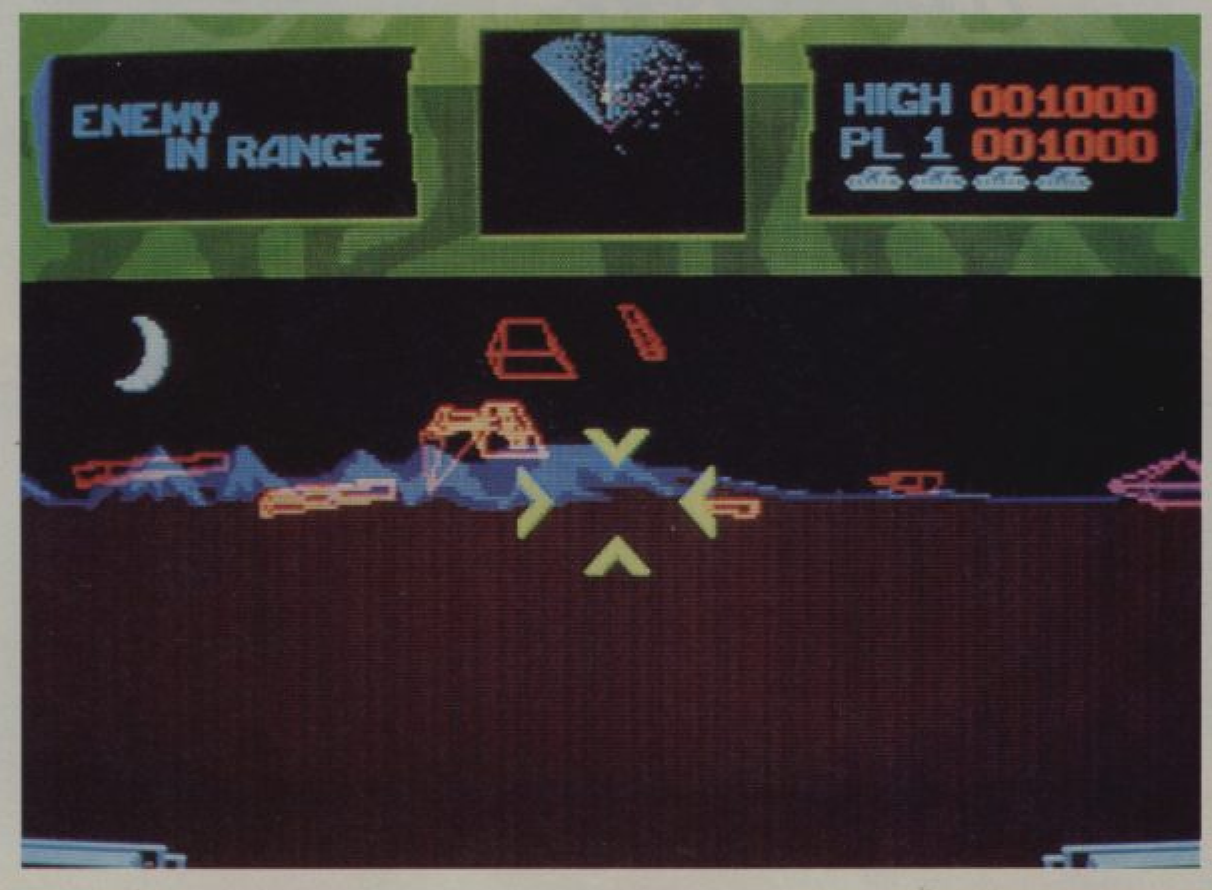
If you can master the pig-like controls, the game is enormous fun, but alas, never was so much appreciated by so few. As luck would have it, Amiga owners will be able to sample the delights of *Zarch* early next year, this time courtesy of Rainbird Software. It will be interesting to see how this version compares with the original.

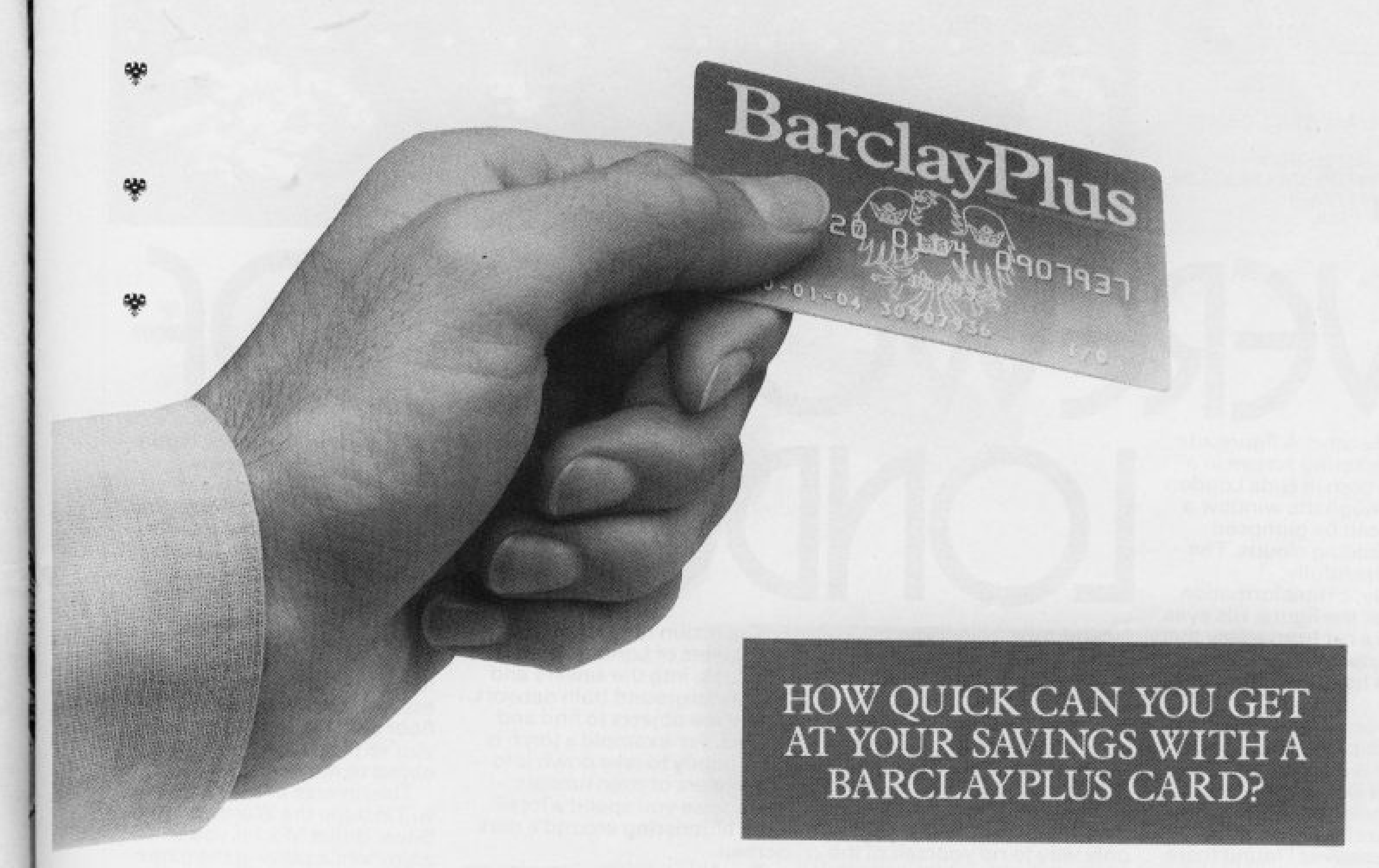
If you've got an Archimedes, why haven't you bought *Zarch*? If you've got *Zarch*, buy an Archimedes!

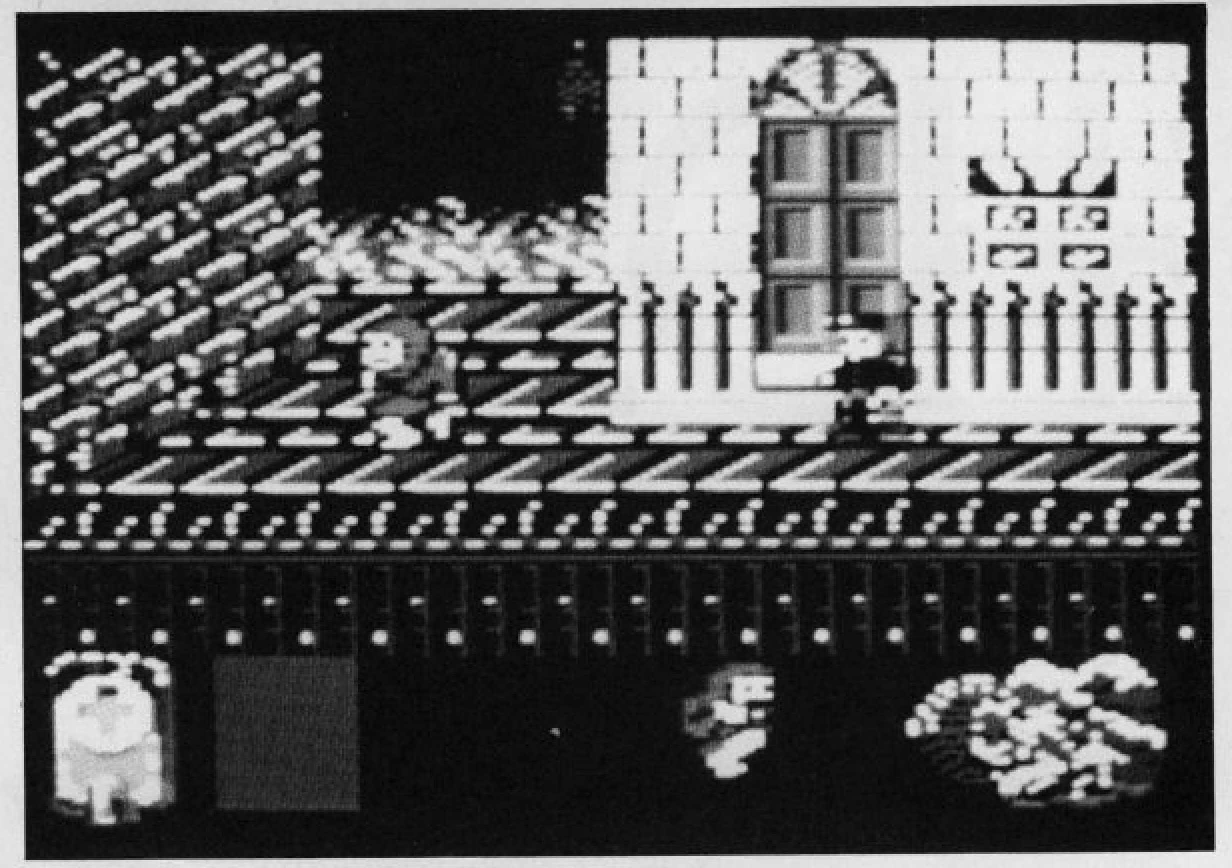
GRAPHICS	10
SOUND	8
VALUE	10
PLAYABILITY	8

C+VG HIT!






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▶ REVIEWER: PAUL

WEREWOLVES OF LONDON

Picture the scene. A figure sits before a flickering screen in a darkened room in Olde London Town. Through the window a full moon can be glimpsed behind scudding clouds. The wind moans fitfully.

Suddenly, a transformation comes over the figure. His eyes gleam like a cat from a face that looks unnaturally hairy. He throws his head back and howls.

Remember, *The Bride of Frankenstein*? Well *Werewolves of London* is also from the same people, Viz Design. And given a straight choice between the two games, I prefer *Frankenstein.* With *Werewolves* I found there just a little too much wandering around with, apparently, not a lot to do.

You play the part of a poor old chap afflicted with lycanthropy, a socially unacceptable condition which means you transform into a werewolf when the moon comes out and subjects you to an uncontrollable bloodlust.

This curse was put on your family in the dim and distant past by an "arrogant family of Sloaney-types". Okay, yah! The only way to rid yourself of the curse is to kill and kill and kill – especially Sloanes. You recognise these because of the crucifix which appears when they are near.

The action ranges through the streets of London, over the rooftops, into the sewers and the underground train network. There are objects to find and collect. For example a torch is very handy to take down into the sewers or train tunnels. Otherwise you spend a lot of time blundering around a dark screen.

You kill simply by jumping on people and savaging them. But you don't have things all your own way. The police are out to catch you. If you get hit by any silver bullets you loose blood. This is seen gruesomely dripping away from what appears to be a plastic plasma bottle under the playing area. You replace your life juice from the bodies of your victims.

If the police catch you they put you in a cell where you must remain until you transform back into human form. You can of course try to escape. Take a look at the cell floor with the manhole cover. If you've picked up the right object to move it.

The reverse of the cassette will include the Werewolf Rap – Silver Bullet Mix for you to enjoy while playing the game.

▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	7
▶ VALUE	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	7

ATHENA

▶ MACHINES: SPECTRUM/ COMMODORE 64/AMSTRAD
▶ SUPPLIER: IMAGINE
▶ PRICE: £7.95
▶ VERSION REVIEWED: COMMODORE 64
▶ REVIEWER: LEE

To describe this in simple terms, it's a sort of cross between *Ghosts 'n' Goblins,* and *Wonder Boy,* in knickers!

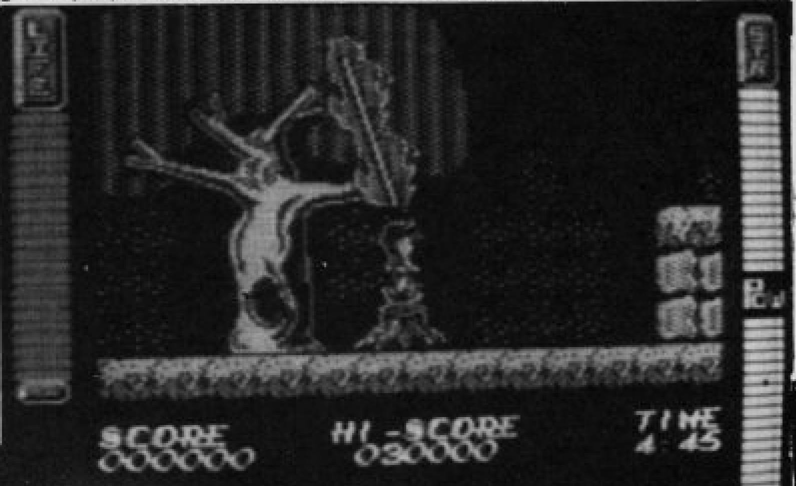
Now recently, Ocean/Imagine have produced some damn good games, such as *Wizball, Slap Fight, Army Moves,* and *Head Over Heels,* so I was quite looking forward to them releasing this. Unfortunately, it was rather a let down. Please don't get me wrong, it's rather a good game, but for some reason, it's just not as playable as I was expecting.

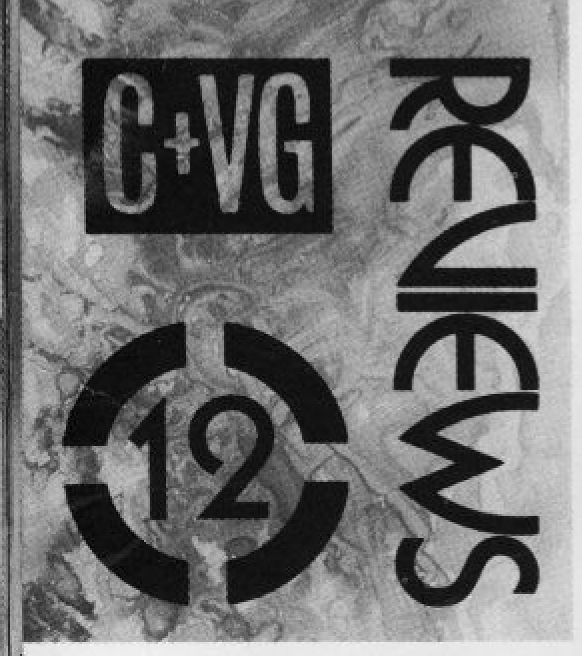
For once in a computer game, you play the role of a woman, Athena, who has been transported to a strange land. Now being a rather brave princess, you travel for many days, avoiding innumerable nasties, to reach the Dark Overlord, who brought her there in the first place, to try and splatter his intestines to the four corners of the galaxy.

The graphics are above average for the Commodore 64, as is the sound, but the nasties come so thick and fast, it's rather unplayable. You tend to find yourself being bombarded by nine or ten baddies at once, and to choose a Lancashire saying, "you don't have a cat in hells chance" of surviving. Perhaps if Imagine had spent a little more time making the game playable, it would have received a better review.

One nice point, is the way you can continue from where you last died for three games, but then you must start again. It could have been one of the best of it's genre, but as it stands, it's just very good.

▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	7
▶ VALUE	8
▶ PLAYABILITY	8





▶ MACHINES: C64/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD
▶ SUPPLIER: DIGITAL INTEGRATION
▶ PRICES: £9.95 (TAPE) £14.95 (DISC)
▶ VERSIONS TESTED: C64/SPECTRUM
▶ REVIEWER: TIM

BOBSLEIGH

We've been bob, bob, bobbing along at C+VG since DI's lastest game arrived in the office. The programmers, famed for their aircraft and bike racing simulations, have taken a step into the unknown and produced a truly excellent and original game based on this thrilling and dangerous sport.

It puts you in charge of a bobsleigh team out to compete in the Winter Olympics. You train your team, organise the finances, set up the bobsleigh and, finally, take part in races down awesome ice-tracks all around the world.

You can practice or race on individual runs or compete in a whole championship season. You begin each season with a certain amount of sponsorship cash – you win more if you do well in competition. But you're more than likely to end up crashing, damaging your bob and forcing a cash outlay on repairs.

You spend your cash on training your team, getting them into shape or purchasing a new customised team uniform – or even buying a new bobsleigh. You'll need to buy new bobs in order to progress through the skill levels.

Each level requires a different type of bob – ultimately an Olympic standard bob to enable you to compete for a coveted gold medal. You can't enter the Olympics unless you've done well in the World Championship season – proving your racing skills.

The game is menu driven – with attractive info windows setting out the different options of presenting relevant information.

Control of the bob requires a delicate touch on the joystick – violent reactions resulting in a bruising, battering crash! Concentration is essential. You may think it looks easy after watching the built in demo – but it 'aint!

Practice makes perfect though – and you get a genuine sense of achievement after completing a run – what ever time you cover the distance in.

The graphics and sound on both versions I've looked at are basic but very effective – you get a real sense of the speed and danger as you career down the claustrophobic ice-lined track, racing around slick ice walls, bumping around corners, speeding under bridges and enduring gut-wrenching high-speed crashes!

Two members of the British Bobsleigh team, Nick Phipps – who once beat Daley Thompson in the decathlon – and Alan Cearns, at present in training for the '88 Winter Olympics, helped out with the design of the simulation – and it shows.

I've never been near a bob – and I reckon this game is about as close as I ever want to get! But DI's usual attention to detail, nice presentation and excellent packaging make *Bobsleigh* a real Christmas gold medal winner! Here's a few hints and tips on gameplay.

A fast push start is very important and will have a large influence on the finish time. The push start depends on how fast you can rock the joystick up and down, and also on your computer level of fitness.

If your fitness level is given as poor or average it would be a good idea to spend some cash to improve your fitness rating, otherwise however hard you rock the joystick up and down you will never be able to achieve the best possible push start.

Smooth driving produces fast times, so gentle steering adjustments on the joystick will produce faster times than wild excessive steering.

Try to find the natural lines through the corners which require the least amount of corrective steering.

Avoid hitting the side walls because this slows the bob down. The bob is most likely to crash when coming out of a corner late and hitting the side wall hard.

Wrong runners on your sleigh will reduce the grip on the ice. This means you will have to hold over the joystick longer to achieve the same control.

If the air temperature is very cold (eg -8 degrees) the ice surface will be hard and bowed runners (type 4) are best because they cut into the ice for better grip. If the air temperature is warm (eg +3 degrees) the ice surface may be melting slightly and a flatter runner (type 1) will provide better grip.

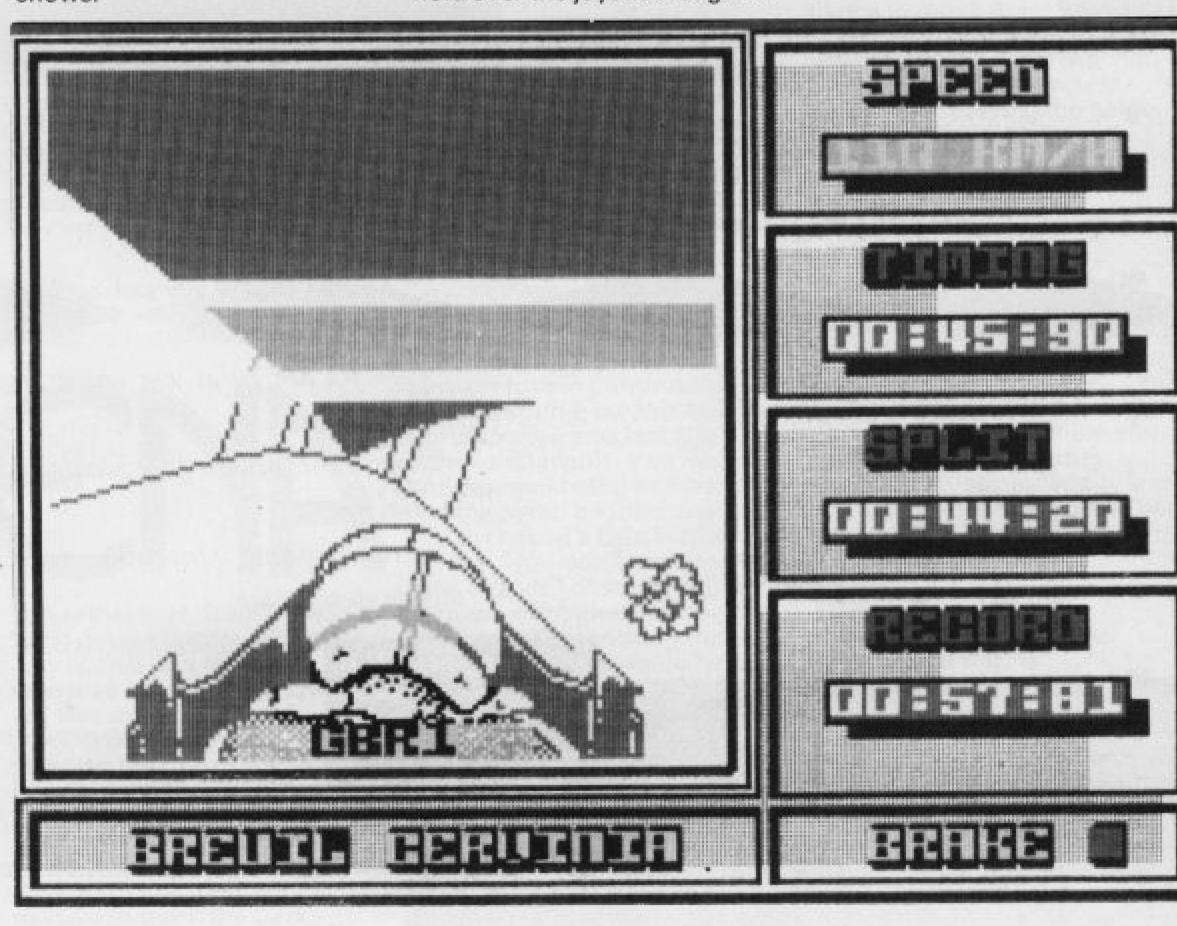
The brake is only to be used after crossing the finish line to bring the bob to a standstill. Use of the brake during the run is prohibited because it scuffs up the track and can slow down the competitors still to come.

There are four classes of bob from amateur up to Olympic, the better the bob the faster it will go. Each class of bob is available as a two man or four man bob. The four man bob is faster than the two man and will incur higher maintenance costs. The Olympic four man is therefore the fastest bob.

If it's speed and excitement you're after then *Bobsleigh* won't let you down – get your skates on and beat it down to your games store NOW!



	C64	Spec
▶ GRAPHICS	8	7
▶ SOUND	7	7
▶ VALUE	9	9
▶ PLAYABILITY	9	9



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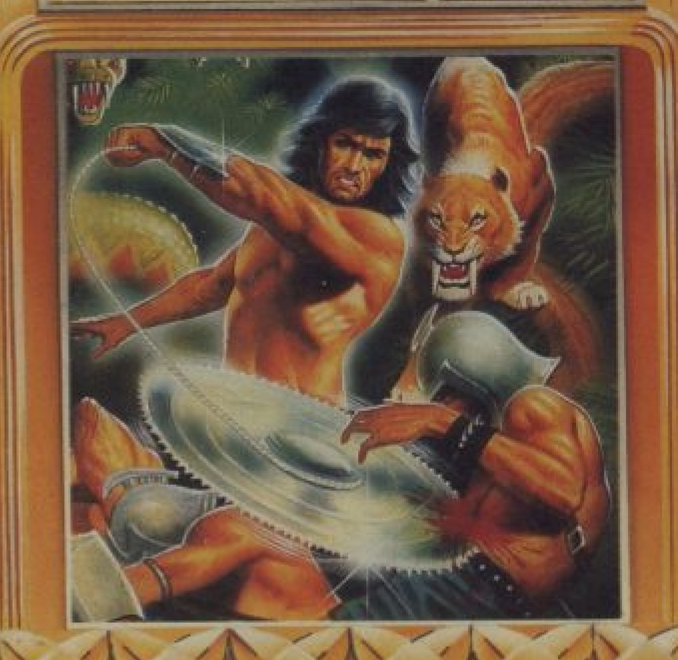




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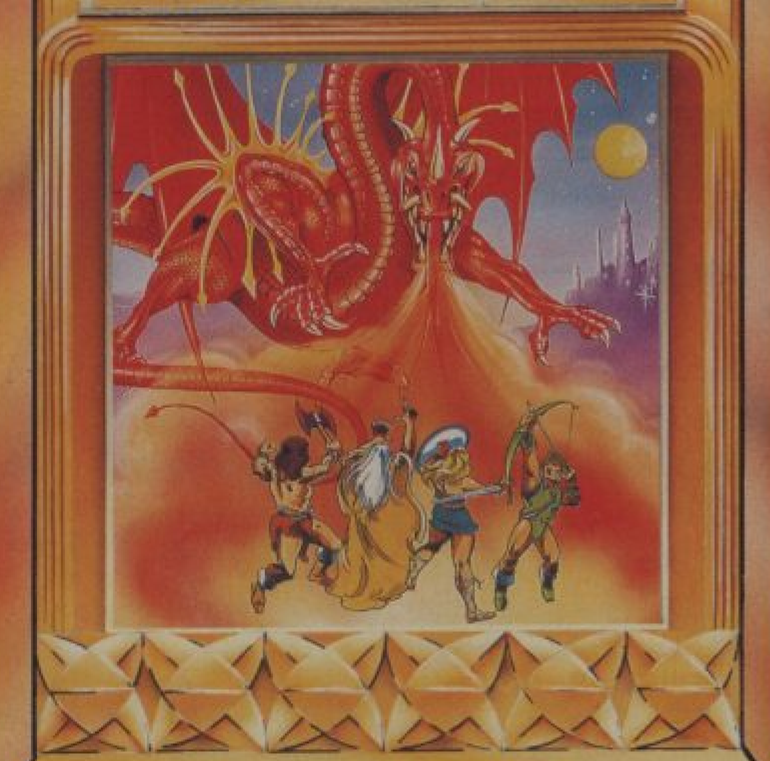
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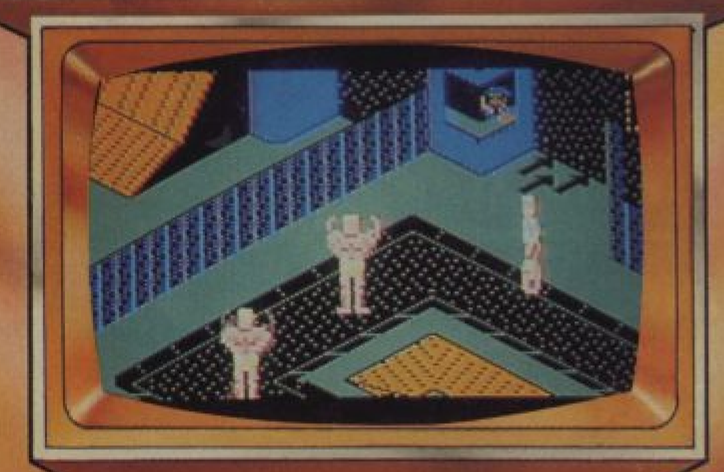


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Software House of the Year

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Runner-up

Adventure of the Year

Runner-up

Arcade Game of the Year

Runner-up

Strategy Game of the Year

Runner-up

Best Original Game

Runner-up

Soundtrack of the Year

Runner-up

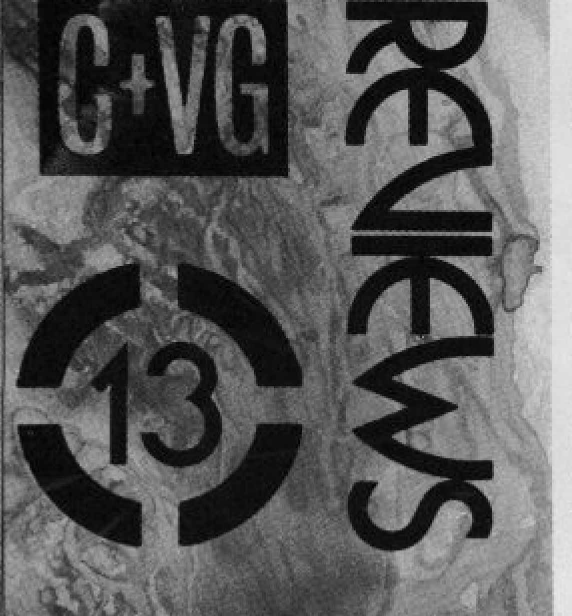
Programmer of the Year

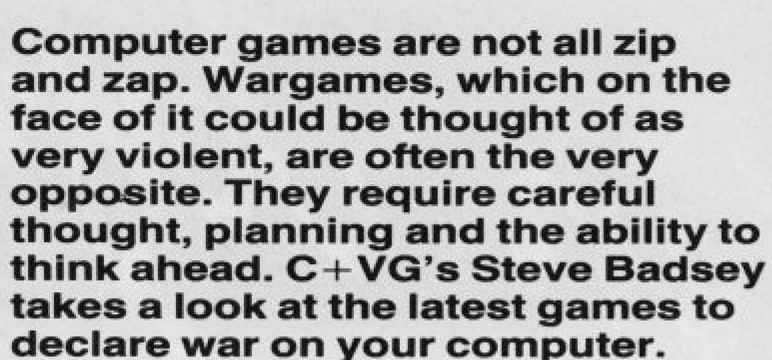
Runner-up

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Computer games are not all zip and zap. Wargames, which on the face of it could be thought of as very violent, are often the very opposite. They require careful thought, planning and the ability to think ahead. C+VG's Steve Badsey takes a look at the latest games to declare war on your computer.

ANNALS OF ROME

▶ **MACHINES: CBM64/AMSTRAD/SPECTRUM/ATARI/IBM**
▶ **SUPPLIER: PSS**
▶ **PRICE: £12.95 (CASS) £17.95 (DISK)**
▶ **VERSION TESTED: CMB64**
▶ **REVIEWER: STEVE**

This is the long-awaited Commodore version of *Annals of Rome*. The game remains as good as ever, probably the best strategy game on the market at the moment.

The single player tries to establish himself on a map of the ancient world a Roman Empire, deploying troops and commanders in variable-length moves of about 20 years. The game has no end and no objective, except survival (the real Roman Empire lasted more than 1600 years). Like the real Romans, the player will find that he has to conquer the world just to stop the world from conquering him.

If the game remains as good as ever, it is hard to see what the converters have done with the Commodore's extra 16K of memory.

The playing map is actually smaller than on the Spectrum version, and in black-and-white instead of colour. The update tables are also smaller and the figures harder to read. The sound effects have gone, and so have a number of touches like the "antique scroll" which gave the Spectrum version its charm.

What you do get is increased reliability. The Spectrum version is very prone to bugs and to impossibly large armies springing up from nowhere (the fault of the machine's random number generator according to PSS, which is rather like blaming your tools).

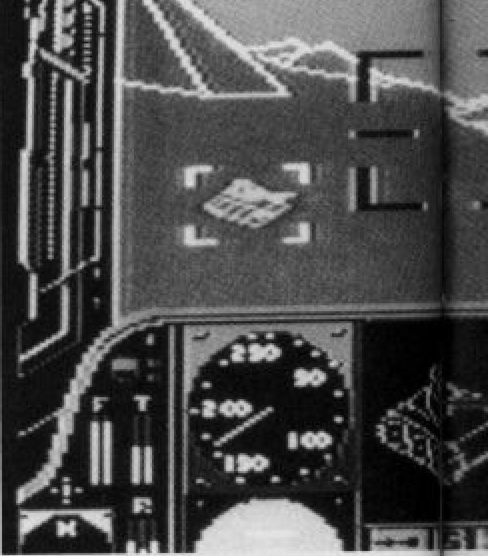
The Commodore version runs smoothly and far more quickly, with a subroutine to safeguard against such random large armies. But – nothing is perfect – this time there is a problem in saving the game, which with a game so long is an essential feature.

PSS have a really excellent game in *Annals of Rome*. If they took a bit more trouble with it they could have a world-beater.

▶ GRAPHICS	5
▶ REALISM	9
▶ VALUE	8
▶ PLAYABILITY	9



GUNS



▶ **MACHINE: CBM64/128, ATARI XL/XE, AMSTRAD 464/664/6128, APPLE, AMIGA, ATARI ST, IBM, SPECTRUM 48/128**
▶ **SUPPLIER: MICROPROSE**
▶ **PRICE: ? (DISK) – (TAPE)**
▶ **VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM 48**
▶ **REVIEWER: STEVE**

This is the Spectrum version of *Gunship*, the best flight/combat simulator available on the market today, based on the American-built Apache combat helicopter now coming into service with the US Army. Microprose has now produced Spectrum versions of most of their best-sellers. But *Gunship* has so much in it that the question was always whether they could fit it all into a Spectrum's memory and graphics.

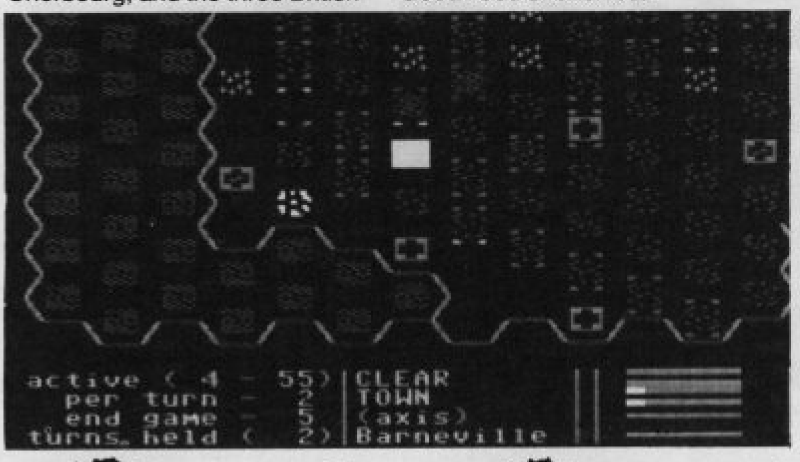
I'm afraid that the short answer is no. The scenarios have all been kept, but the solid

BATTLES IN NORMANDY

▶ **MACHINES: CBM64/APPLE II**
▶ **SUPPLIER: STRATEGIC PLUS SOFTWARE/STRATEGIC STUDIES GROUP**
▶ **PRICE: £23.95 (DISK)**
▶ **VERSION TESTED: CBM64**
▶ **REVIEWER: STEVE**

The Strategic Studies Group of Australia, responsible for games like *Carriers At War* and *Europe Ablaze*, now has a sole UK importer in Strategic Software Plus of Middlesex, which should make their games more easily available.

Battles in Normandy is an operational Corps level game of eight scenarios covering the major battles of the campaign before the breakout: the American airdrop at Carantan, the crucial landings at Omahah, Utah and Sword beaches, the American drive on Cherbourg, and the three British attempts to take Caen in the Villers-Bocage, Epsom and Goodwood offensives.



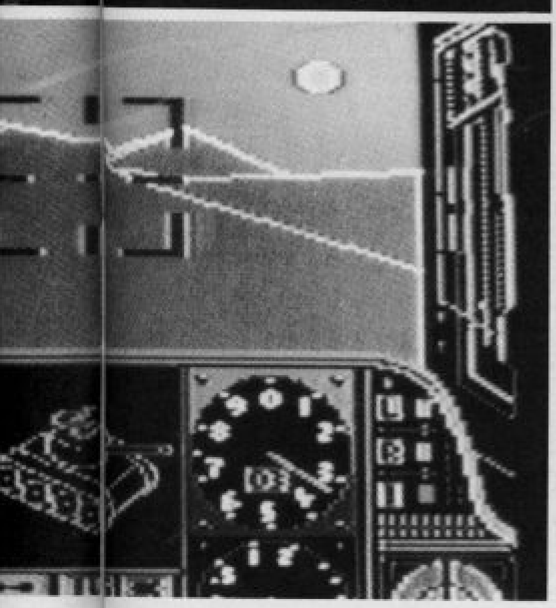
There is also, as normal with SSG games, a design routine enabling players to develop their own scenarios.

If all this sounds like a development of the earlier SSG Corps-level game *Battlefront*, then that's because that is exactly what it is. Scenarios developed on *Battlefront* will run on *Battles in Normandy* and vice versa.

SSG provide, as a rule, expensive but high-quality games. *Battles in Normandy* is well below their normal standard.

▶ GRAPHICS	2
▶ REALISM	5
▶ VALUE	3
▶ PLAYABILITY	4

...NSHIP



landscape view and multi-coloured map have been replaced by wire-frame hills and trees, and the cockpit layout is far harder to read than in other versions.

The problem is that *Gunship* is in fact so good. It is such a realistic and complex simulator that it needs split-second responses from the player, just like flying a real combat helicopter while trying to engage an enemy. This version, with its fuzzy graphics and trick controls, just isn't up to it.

The good news for Spectrum 128 owners is that if they send the game back to Microprose they will provide a single-cassette version, instead of the three sides of tape.

▸ GRAPHICS	5
▸ REALISM	7
▸ VALUE	6
▸ PLAYABILITY	5

ROAD TO MOSCOW

▸ **MACHINE: CBM64**
▸ **SUPPLIER: ELECTRONIC ARTS FOR GAMES DESIGN WORKSHOP**
▸ **PRICE: N/A**
▸ **REVIEWER: STEVE**

In this game of the Eastern Front in World War Two the single player takes the Axis forces (the Germans and their allies) against the computer as the Russians on a map that covers the whole Eastern Front from Finland to the Crimea (achieved by having East at the top of the map so that the Germans attack upwards).

The playing mechanism could hardly be more simple: in the order phase, each Corps is selected by joystick and moved with up to five directional changes, then in the movement phase they all attempt to move together.

The computer calculates how far such a unit could actually move over that type of ground in those weather conditions.

If an enemy is in the given path it is attacked, and units which are attacked too heavily lose strength, retreat, or are wiped out.

There are no rules for formations higher than a Corps, but each must keep within reasonable distance of an Army Group headquarters or run into supply problems. Putting movement and combat together like this speeds the game up considerably, and creates the realistic problem of avoiding traffic jams. Even at two moves to a month it is possible to play a year-long scenario in an evening.

The game reflects the only chance the Germans had of winning on the Eastern Front, a quick victory before the Soviets could build up overwhelming forces, and before the dreaded Russian winter could take effect.

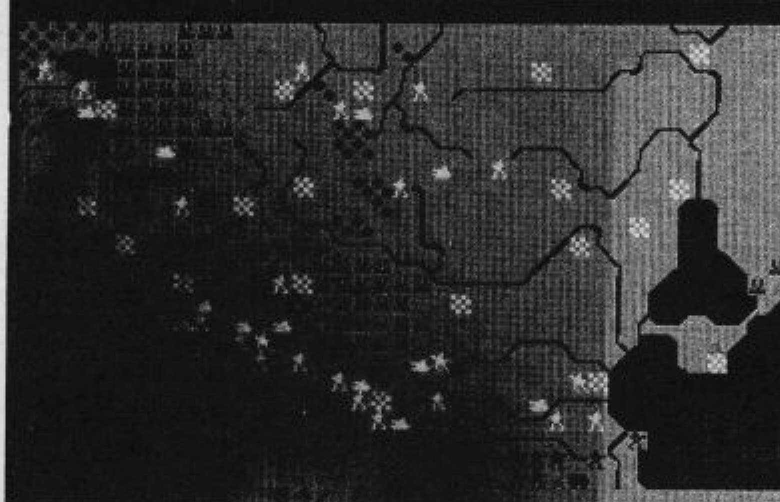
On the campaign scenario, which covers the entire war, the Russians will surrender only if every city on the screen (Moscow, Stalingrad, Leningrad and everything west of them) are captured. Since this is just about impossible, there are also four one-year scenarios for each year from 1941, with their own victory conditions.

The player has to concentrate on two essentials: keeping his crucial Panzer forces well forward, but in supply and not so heavily engaged that they become useless, and judging when to call off an offensive and prepare defensive positions for the winter.

The end of the game, by the surrendering of either side, can sometimes be triggered by accident, which is annoying.

The game is meant to save directly onto the playing disk, a good idea but with the review copy it didn't work. But these are minor grumbles at what is a good computer wargame with an excellent playing mechanism.

▸ GRAPHICS	8
▸ REALISM	7
▸ VALUE	8
▸ PLAYABILITY	8



RUSSIA—1941-1945

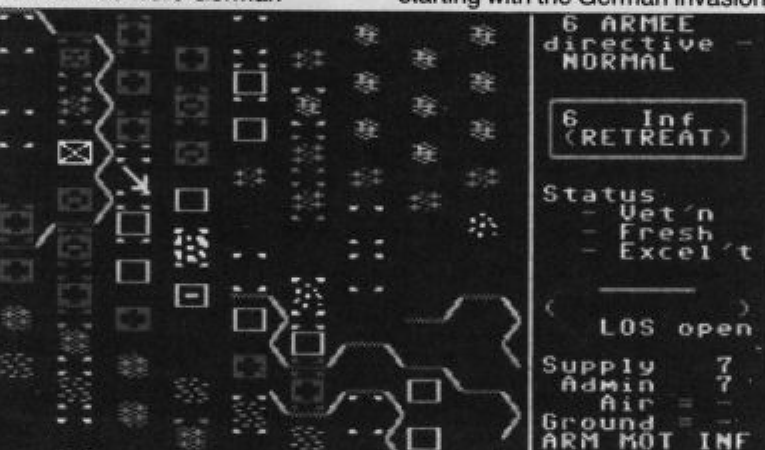
▸ **MACHINE: CBM64/APPLE II**
▸ **SUPPLIER: STRATEGIC SOFTWARE PLUS/STRATEGIC STUDIES GROUP**
▸ **PRICE: £23.95 (DISK)**
▸ **VERSION TESTED: CMB64**
▸ **REVIEWER: STEVE**

Russia combines features of two earlier SSG games, *Europe Ablaze* and *Battlefront*. Unfortunately, they are some of the worst features of each game.

Like *Battles in Normandy* this game uses the basic three divisions to a Corps organisation of *Battlefront*, renamed as three Corps to an Army Group, and there are three training scenarios: Army Group North's drive on Leningrad in 1941, Army Group South's drive on Stalingrad in 1942, and Army Group Centre's offensive at Kursk in 1943.

Something of SSG's view of the campaign comes out in the fact that all three were German failures.

The main game on the disk, however, is one of grand strategy starting with the German invasion in 1941. Each Army Group (or Russian Frontal Command) revises its moves and objectives once a week. But once every four weeks the higher command may allocate resources, priorities and strategy. The computer can take as many roles as required. The problem is that, much as for *Europe Ablaze,* the player who opts for high command has to sit through 15 minutes of the computer bleeping to itself. If the player takes one or more Army Groups as well, it becomes 30 minutes. As the graphics are very poor ones used on *Battlefront* this is 30 minutes of total confusion and boredom.



▸ GRAPHICS	3
▸ REALISM	6
▸ VALUE	5
▸ PLAYABILITY	3



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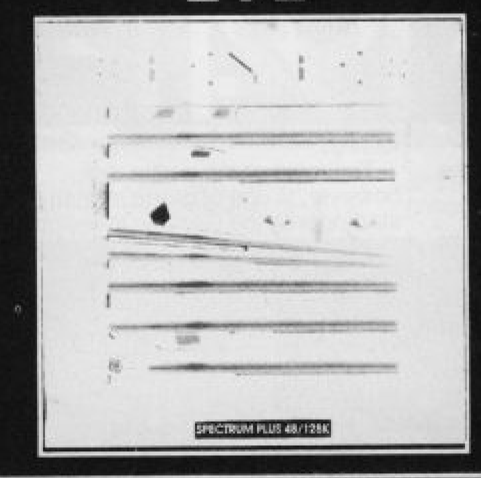
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BURN R

Do-do, run run, do-do-run run! Hey, it's here and it's hot! The arcade game of 87 is just about to race onto your computer. It's *Out Run* of course – the game you've ALL been waiting for. Read about the game. Check out our outrageous Out Run competition. The action starts here!



It's all Sega's fault. They are the company who unleashed *Out Run* onto an unsuspecting world. Arcade addicts walked into their local video palaces and discovered a huge new hydraulic machine sitting conspicuously in the middle of the floor.

Once they slipped into the bucket seat, took hold of the steering wheel and screeched off the starting grid, they were hooked. It would take a very big bouncer or lack of cash to keep them off this mega-machine!

The basic idea is very simple. You drive a flash Ferrari roadster as fast as you can over an ever changing American highway. There's a time limit to beat if you want to move onto the next level, and you have to deal with some heavy traffic – in the shape of Mack trucks, sluggish VW beetles, slick Corvettes and other US automobiles.

What really made the game stand out – apart from the incredible hydraulic cabinet – were the awesome graphics. Your roadster raced through some of the most spectacular scenery ever seen on an arcade machine.

And not only that – you raced around blind bends, over hills and down dips – making the *Out Run* experience simply awesome.

You really do get a Ferrari driver's eye view of the road ahead – and it's really very hairy racing over the crest of a hill only to find a huge great truck in front of you. Slam on the brakes, skid, slide and CRASH!

That crash! People used to do it deliberately just to experience the shaking the hydraulic cabinet gave you! The car flips over and over – but just like the A-Team no-one is EVER hurt, despite the violence of the accident. The driver and his cute blonde girlfriend are thrown clear, ready to pick themselves up and climb back in the car.

The blonde is a bit of a back seat driver – she wags her finger at you accusingly if you skid or spin off the road. Ahh, shaddup you stupid broad!

What also makes *Out Run* pretty neat is that there's more than one route to the finish of this Cannonball Run – so even if you play it a lot you won't get bored. Bored? With *Out Run*? Are you kidding?!

It's the game that everyone on C+VG wants in their bedroom. But – because even Garry Williams doesn't earn enough folding green stuff to buy one – we're all going to have to make do with the computer version from **US Gold**. And here we take a look at the different versions of the game currently coming your way!

Out Run – The Small Screen Versions

Commodore 64

Huge graphics, fast scrolling and brilliant sounds make this version of the coin-op classic a good bet for the number one slot this Christmas. You can choose between two different music soundtracks before you start to play. But, as of a couple of weeks ago, it looks as if you won't be seeing the forks in the road you come across in the arcade version. But you will see the hills and the high-G corners.



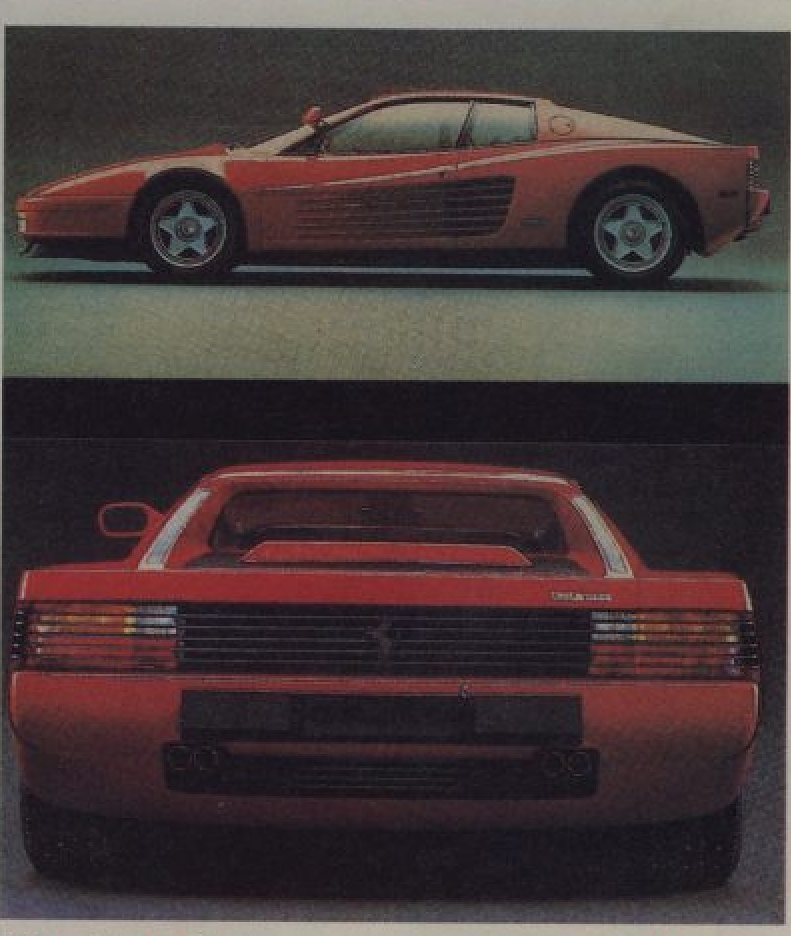
△ COMMODORE 64

RUBBER



The Ferrari Testarossa

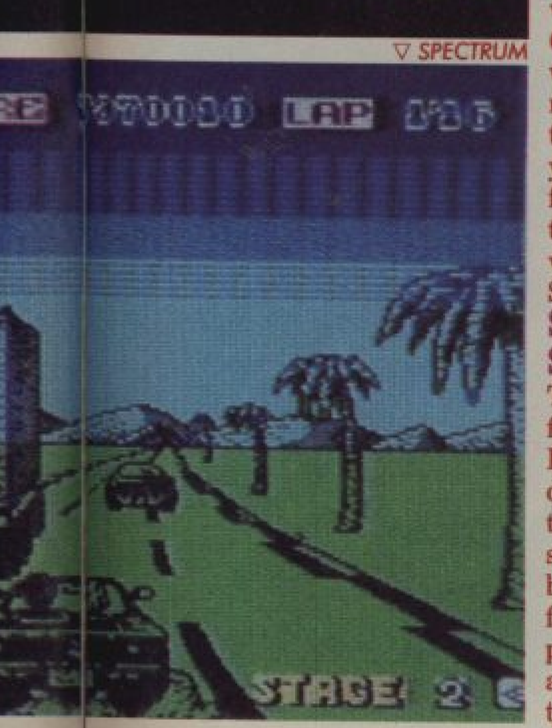
The car in Sega's *Out Run* is based on the Ferrari Testarossa – but in real life you couldn't get a convertible version even if you wanted one. The Testarossa would set you back a breath-taking £80,000 and is one of the fastest legal street cars you can buy with a top speed of over 180 mph. In fact it can reach over 50 mph in first gear. It gets its name from the red rocker covers on the engine – a great Ferrari tradition. It has a five speed gearbox, five spoke alloy wheels and the fantastic Ferrari red paint job. The Testarossa is regarded, by those who can afford it, as THE perfect supercar – better than a Porsche or Lamborghini. Can I have one for Christmas, please Santa?



△ AMSTRAD



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Spectrum

Could this be the best version of the bunch? It's being brought to you by Probe, the team who did such a brilliant job on *Enduro Racer* from Activision. And *Enduro* was another Sega coin-op hit which blazed the trail for *Out Run* in the arcades. The graphic capabilities of the Speccy limit the programmers – but as you can see, the detail they've managed to cram in is pretty amazing. Hills and dips in this version too.

Amstrad

Possibly the most colourful version of the lot, the Amster *Out Run* is the only version we haven't yet seen up and running – so apart from these screens we can't tell you much about it – apart from the fact that the Probe team are working on this version as well as the Spectrum game.

Sega Master System

This is the version from Sega for their own games console. It has all the graphics, the different routes, the music, the crashes and smooth, fast scrolling. Somewhat spoiled by chunky sprites and flickery graphics at certain points of the game – but still a damn good game for all that.

The Arcade Machine

This is the mega-machine that started it all. What more can you say? Except try and win one in our exclusive coin-op competition!



● *Out Run will be available in December for the Commodore 64 (£9.99 tape, £11.99 disc) Spectrum (£8.99) Amstrad (£9.99 tape, £14.99 disc) and Atari ST (£19.99).*

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Wayne's PLAY BY MAIL.

As I write, tickets for the **Third British P.B.M. Convention** are being snapped up by C+VG readers like hot cakes. Hundreds have been sold to date and if last year is anything to go by a last minute rush is on the cards.

For those of you who do not know what to expect at a P.B.M. convention, read on. This year's convention takes place on 20th February 1988 at The Porchester Centre, Queensway, London W2, which is a straight 300 yard walk left from Royal Oak underground station.

The 22 P.B.M. companies in the U.K. are attending and a few of the companies that have already confirmed that they will be attending are: **Sloth Enterprises, Mitre Games, Spellbinder Games, Legend Incorporated, D.M.C. Games, Jade Games** and **The Laboratory**.

There are many others, but I cannot list them all. There will be a large number of amateur P.B.M companies attending. This is your chance to talk to the games masters and owners of the companies and put your questions and queries to them direct. Find out about games that you wanted to join but were not sure about, meet friends and enemies, and chat to the players of every game.

This is a golden opportunity to find out first hand what is going on in the P.B.M. scene as well as pick up a few freebies. You can also find out all about the B.P.B.M.A. players association and join on the spot.

The organisers also realise that most players of P.B.M. are closely linked or involved with Fantasy Role Playing, so they have organised a large F.R.P. display as well. There will be live roleplaying, run by the Labyrinthe Club, where you can actually participate in dungeon adventures or watch demonstration adventurers, a F.R.P. stall where you can stock up on all the latest games as well as buy miniature figures, paints and other accessories, an AD+D open



Busy, busy, busy, that is the only way to describe the P.B.M. scene at the moment! Yes, it's all go, with lots of special offers for all you P.B.M'ers out there, so let's get on with keeping you up to date with the news and views from the ever changing world of P.B.M. Remember though, that if you apply for more than one offer you must send the relevant amounts of S.S.A.E's required or you will only receive the first offer you ask for!

competition with prizes, war game demonstrations, bring and buy auctions, quizzes and competitions and computer games to play.

C+VG will also be running a computer games competition.

There will be a licensed bar, plus mini-cafe and I will be on stage running things, giving away all manner of prizes, you have the recipe for a great day's entertainment.

The doors open at 10.30a.m. and close at 5p.m. and tickets on the door cost £2.00. However, C+VG readers can get a 25% discount if they write in and buy their tickets in advance.

All you have to do is cut out my picture on this page and send it to me care of C+VG with a cheque or P/O for £1.50 made payable to the B.P.B.M.A. and a s.s.a.e. and you will receive your ticket post haste!

An advance ticket entitles you to priority entrance to the conference so there will be no hanging about in a queue waiting to get in.

● Talking about the **B.P.M.A.**, their booklet *"Guide to P.B.M."*, which covers every aspect of P.B.M. including playing hints and tips plus advice is still available. They have given away hundreds of FREE copies to date, so there are only the odd hundred or so left. Therefore if you would like to get your hands on a FREE copy of the guide, just send a s.s.a.e. to me at the mag and I will pass on your request.

● The C+VG game **It's a Crime** has really hotted up. As I write, week 14 has just come into operation and the most notorious gang is the **Crazy Diamonds** with a score of 440 points. They smashed their way into the number one spot by managing to make a massive notoriety increase of 98 in one turn. Crucial lawbreaking guys!

They must have done some well bad crimes to obtain all that notoriety at once. In fact they won the biggest notoriety increase for week 14 and were awarded eight free turns by K.J.C.. Well done The Diamonds.

However, they have not got things all their own way. **Satansfist**, the previous leaders of the table are close behind in third place, with 413 points and **The Lumps of Green Putty** have moved up to second place with a total of 427. Other gangs previously mentioned in this column who are still in the running are **The Sons Of Batman** in thirteenth place with a score of 342 and **The Enforcers**, in nineteenth place with 323.

By the way, can anyone tell me what happened to the **Colbornites** who were previously number one? I can not find a trace of them anywhere!

If YOUR gang has done anything of note that you think C+VG readers should know, drop me a line and I will publish your comments and spread your rep!!

● For those of you **Crime** players that own either a 48k/128k/ZX Spectrum playing the game has just become more easier. **Andrew Rose** has

Wayne's PLAY BY MAIL.

invented a *Crime* turf mapper which enables you to build up a turf map, which can be stored on tape. You can lay out your gangs turf on a map which is divided into fifteen by sixteen blocks. Six blocks are shown on the screen at any one time, each displaying, block no., controlling gang, gang no., building types and percentages, total block income plus the all important defence level.

Furthermore, you can update your map by amending the details and it even prints out the turf map on a compatible computer.

If you are interested, then drop me a line at the mag, with a cheque for £2, made payable to **Andrew Rose** and I will pass them on.

● It is still possible for you to participate in the C+VG version of *It's A Crime*. All you have to do is drop me a line, with your name and address and I will forward your details on the K.J.C. for inclusion in the game.

On a final crime note, I would advise you that the boss levels are not to far away and a good player will already be in a position to assume the mantle of a boss. Full details of the boss requirements were published last issue, so you should know them by now!

● There are many Fanzines covering P.B.M. and I know for a fact that a lot of you out there like reading about the different P.B.M's available on the market and finding out more about them. Well, I have been sent a couple of P.B.M. Fanzines which are well worth a look.

The first one is called **P.B.M. File** and its debut issue is dedicated solely to *It's A Crime*. It covers such topics as the analysis of orders and actions, Boss level plus hints tips and advice. The editor draws from the real experiences that he and others have encountered during the various games that they have played, then moulds these encounters into solid advice.

The magazine is created on a Gestetner printer and is 90% typed and 10% hand written. The actual printing is OK, but the quality varies from page to page. Also the spelling leaves a lot to be desired.

However, if you are looking for a little light reading on *Crime*, then look no further.

New *Crime* players will find it an essential buy as it gives so much away. I particularly liked the cartoon, "Joe Pro", which is a series about the adventures and mishaps of a lone pro in *Crime*. If you are interested, please send a cheque/postal order for 70p into the mag plus a A4 sized s.s.a.e. All payments to be made payable to **Philip Rankin** please.

The next Fanzine up is **P.B.M. Scroll**. The issue I received is number two and it covers a diverse range of games. It concentrates on the less well known P.B.M.s, such as *Alkimora* and *Glindor*, but also has short pieces on more famous games like *Saturnalia*.

The reviews are brief, but to the point and like the fanzine mentioned above, the editor draws on his actual experiences in the relevant games.

It is well produced on A4 photocopied paper and the printing is of a high standard overall. It is aimed at the new player and it promises to be produced on a Memotech by next issue.

Furthermore, it promises to also contain a billboard where players are free to make general announcements in forthcoming editions.

There are quite a few free offers, plus reduced start up prices and is well worth buying for these alone.

An interesting read and well worth the 50p **John Woods** is asking for it. Again interested parties should send the relevant cheques, P/O's and s.s.a.e's to me and I will pass them on.

● Finally this month I will answer one question that seems to keep on cropping up time and time again. The question is "Why don't you cover amateur P.B.M. games in your column?"

The reason for this is simple. Whilst amateur P.B.M.'s are great fun to play and sometimes are more value for money that some so called professional games, they are only run on a part time basis.

This can lead to some games achieving cult status and the word gets around the P.B.M. grapevine that certain games are fantastic to play as they are very cheap and full of intricate detail.

Of course loads of people apply to play sending cheques, P/O's and the like as they want to get in fast and the game has got a sudden influx of players which can number up to 100 new players.

Whilst the more reasonable amateur games would send the cheques back, saying that your application is on a waiting list for players to drop out so you can take their place, others would cash your cheques etc and try and cope.

The person running the game soon finds out that working part time and trying to run a big P.B.M. is usually impossible, so the game disappears and 90% of the time your money goes with it.

Therefore I would not like to send your money off to a company that couldn't eventually cope with the chance that they might lose it. For example over the last few months **Spellbinder** games has given the readers some very special offer and they received over 800 letters in response.

Being a professional company they took it in their stride and dealt with the requests with no problems what so ever. However an amateur company just couldn't cope with the demand.

However, I realise that a lot of readers out there want to play, cheap amateur games and are willing to take a gamble with your money. So if you are interested in playing amateur games, write in and let me know, as I am considering creating an encyclopaedia of amateur P.B.M.s, which will give you full details of the game, the price, the address and any other relevant details.

I will charge a nominal price for sending it out and getting it together. So if you are interested, drop me a line at the mag and if there is sufficient demand I will get things moving.

● Next month is the birthday of the column and I will be re-reviewing every game covered in all 12 issues and giving away loads of bargains. Of course, anyone who sends a birthday card will get priority treatment!

● Some readers have written in to say that they haven't received their start up, rule books and three free turns from **Spellbinder Games** yet and other offers that they sent away for. Well, don't fret, because I have the answer.

The good old P.O. lost a large parcel that was sent to me from C+VG to my home address! Three weeks later, they found it again! On behalf of the P.O. I apologise for the inconvenience, but as this was only one parcel lost out of about 50 we will let them off.

● Are there any P.B.M.ers out there who fancy playing P.B.M.s from across the Atlantic with our cousins in the USA? Have you ever fancied trying playing postal games abroad, but have been frightened off by the rigmorole and the cash worries?

Well, I am now playing three U.S. P.B.M's namely, **Warp Forces Empire** from **Enterprise Games Systems** a sci-fi computer moderate game, **Duel Masters**, a computerised game of gladitorial team combat and **The Hypoborian Wars**, which is a P.B.M. game licenced by the estate of **R.E. Howard** and is set in the period inhabited by Conan. Both Duel Masters and Hypoborian Wars are run by **Reality Simulations Inc** and all three look very good indeed.

If any of you out there, be it British or overseas players, who play games that are run outside your home country and experience problems, I will be interested to know what bugs you the most, as well as what strange and interesting experiences you may have had. Just drop me a line, you know the address.



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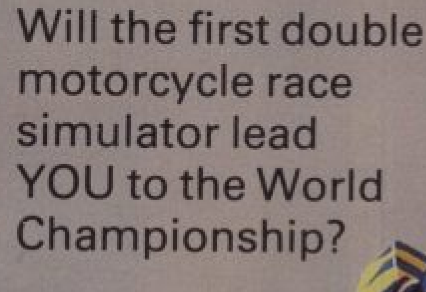




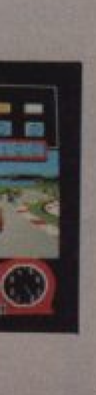
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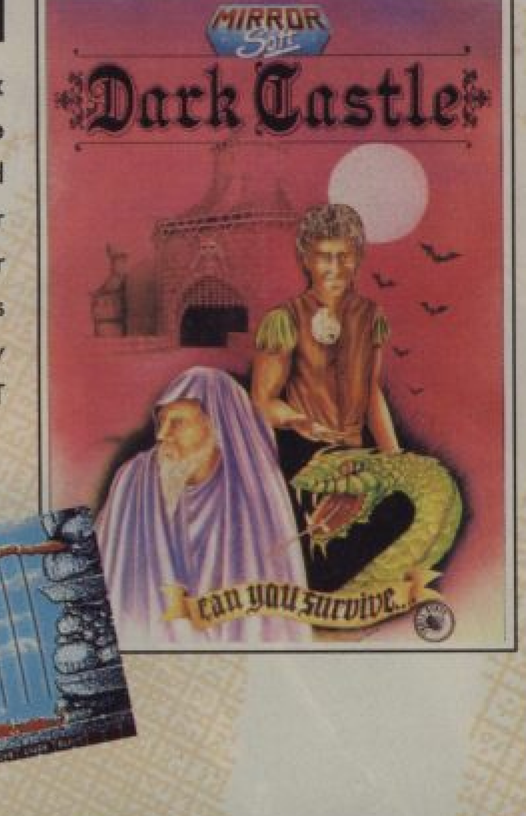
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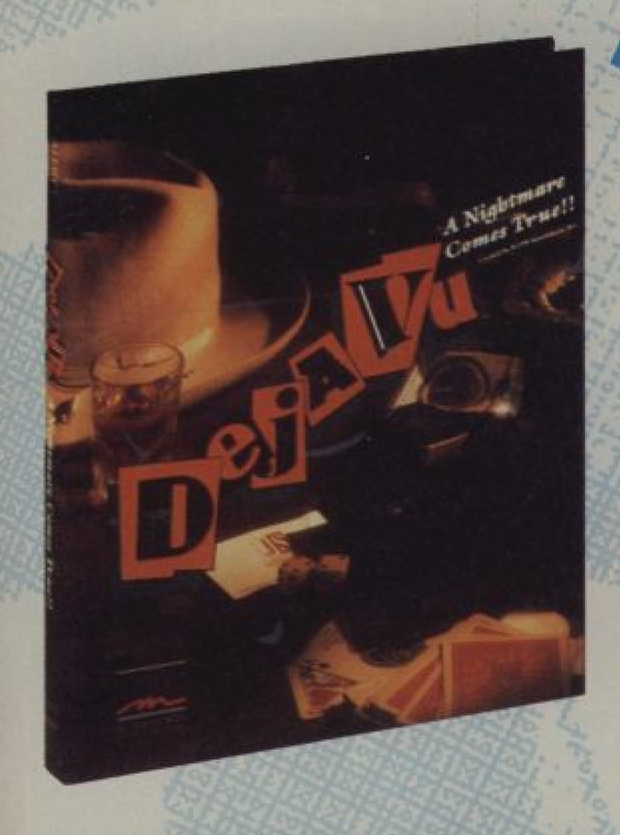
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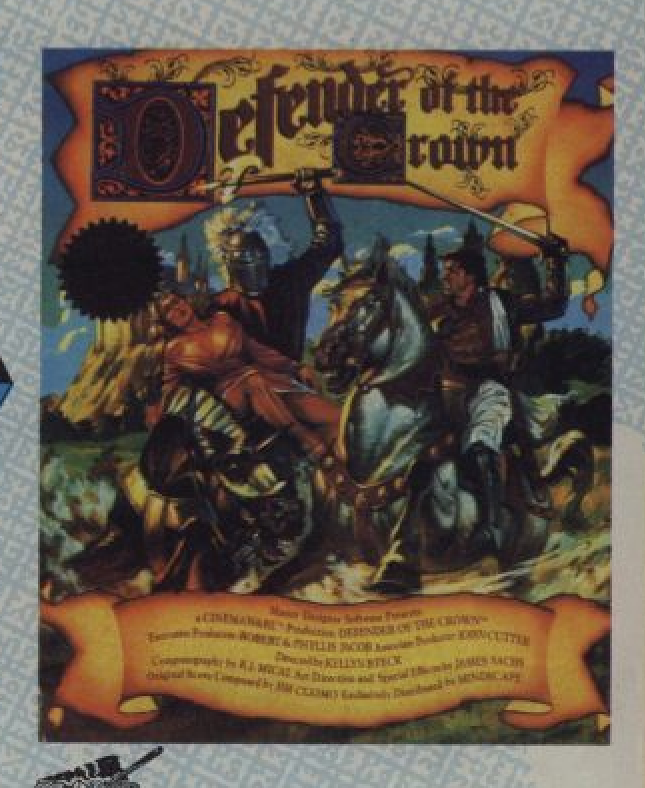
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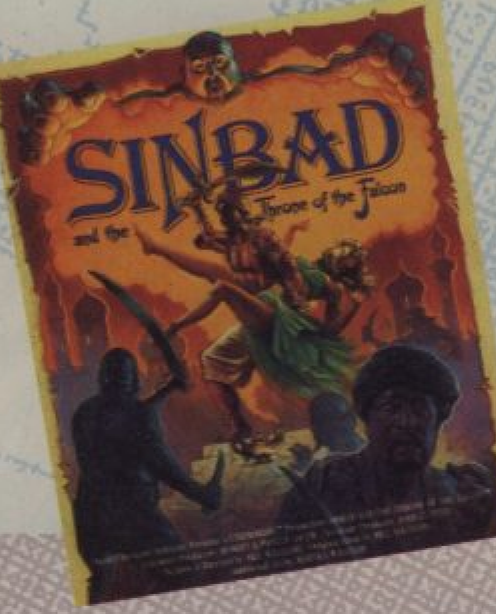
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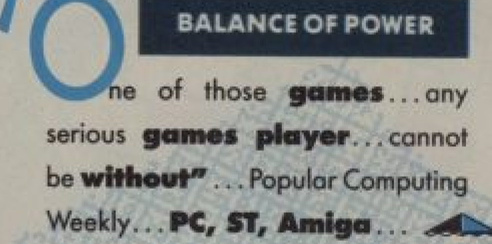


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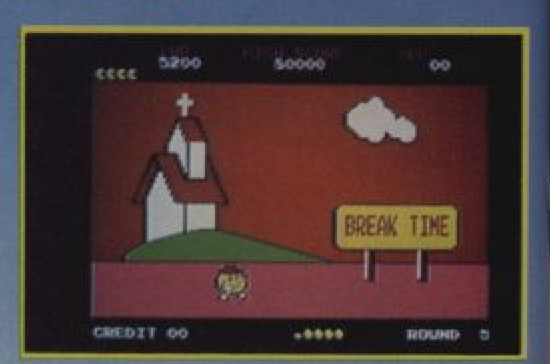


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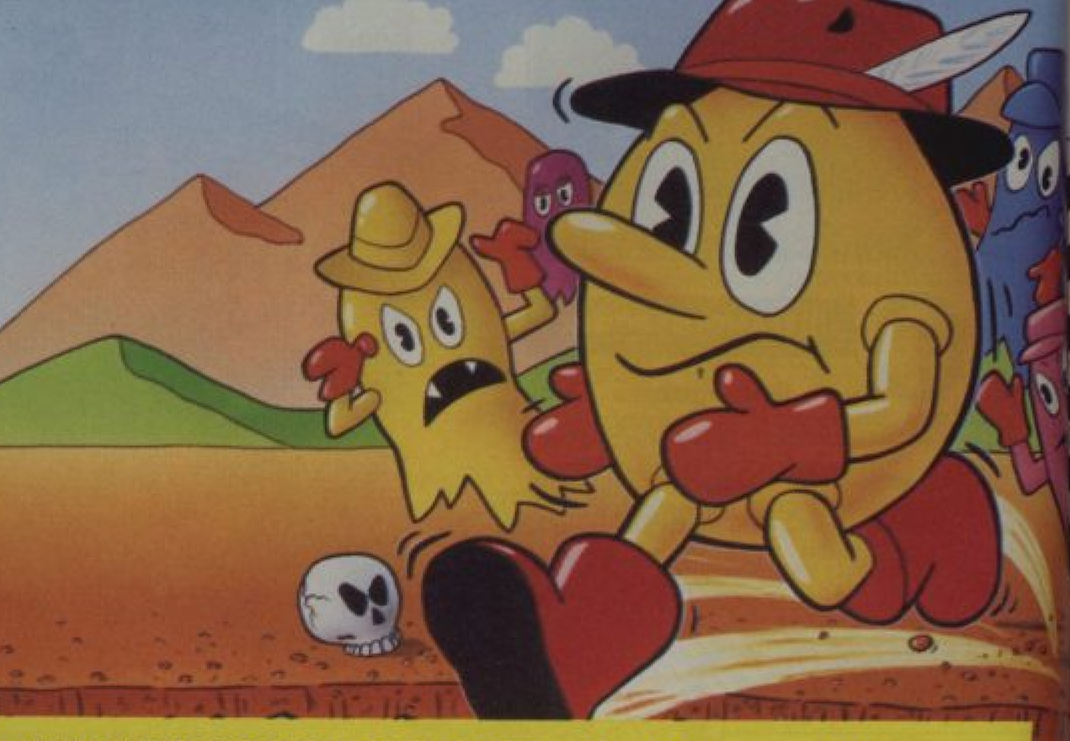
PAC'S BACK

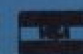


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Normal C+VG rules apply, closing date is January 16th.

C+VG/INCENTIVE DRILLER COMPETITION

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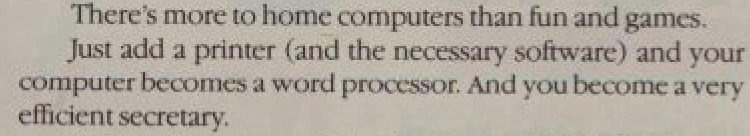
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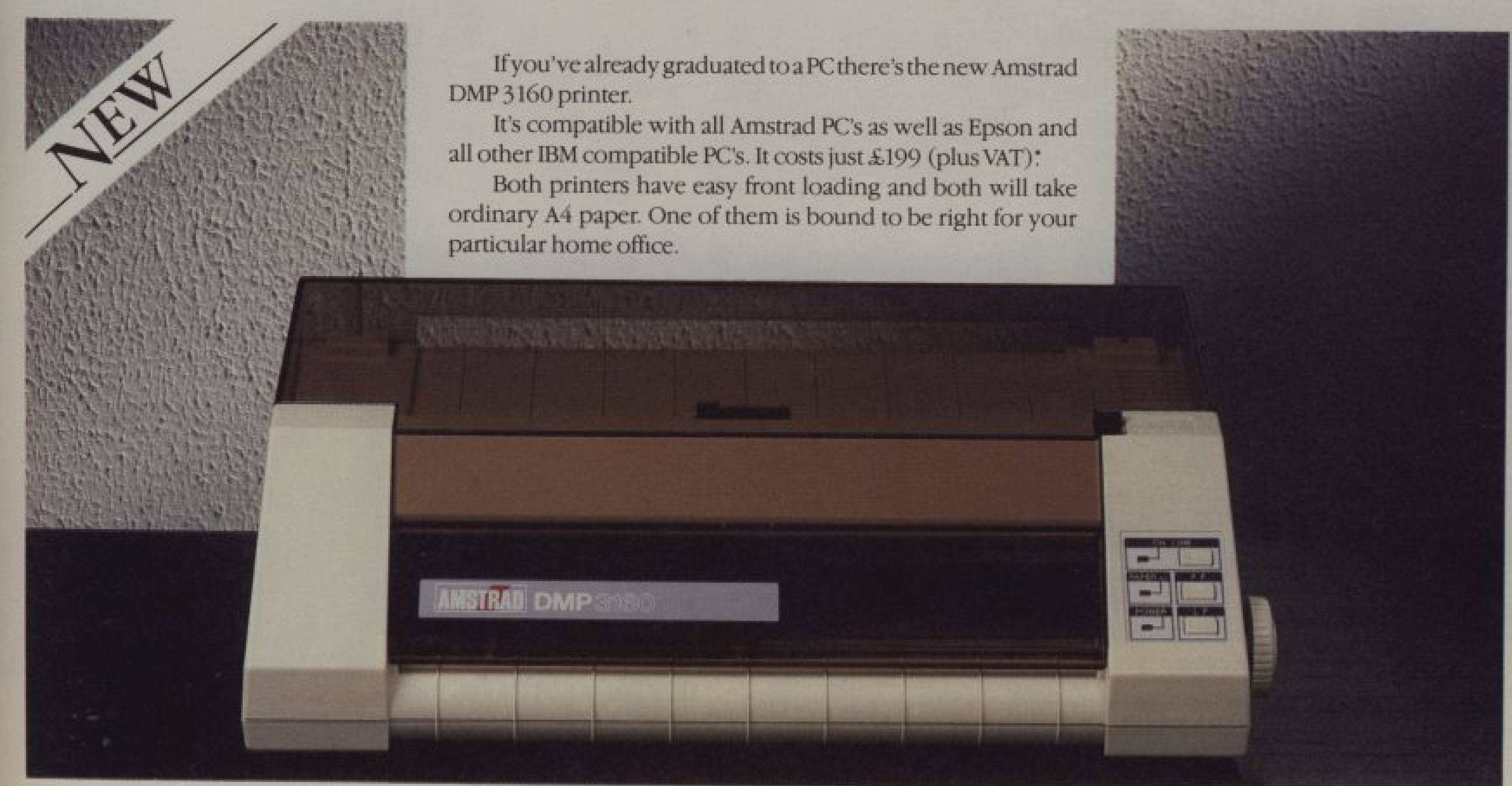
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IDEAS CENTRAL

Nebulus

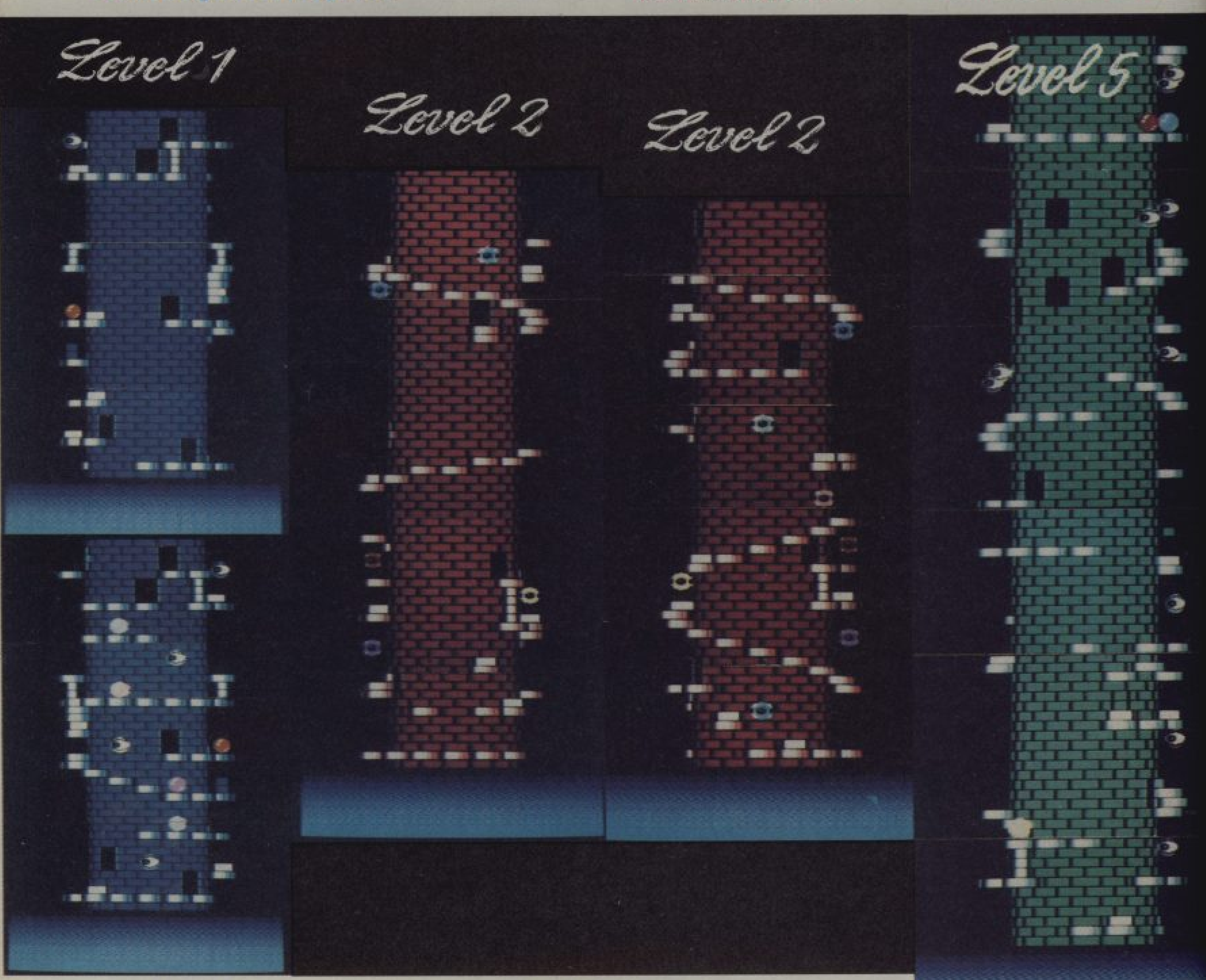
Hewson's Nebulus – a C+VG Game of the Month in December – is probably the most original game concept of the year. It's simple – that doesn't mean easy – and very addictive. Programmer John Phillips has written this exclusive guide to his game.

Nebulus is a unique game in which the character you control – Pogo – has to climb and ultimately destroy a series of mysterious towers which rise from the sea on an alien planet.

Pogo works for Destructor Inc, a demolition company given the job of destroying the towers.

These towers are covered with ledges, lifts and tunnels. Some of these ledges disolve when you step onto them, plunging Pogo into the sea, others are slippery and will send him shooting along. Pogo's progress is further hindered by flashing blocks and bouncing balls and leering eyes.

What makes the game so ▶



1: THE TOWER OF EYES
Once you have arrived on the tower go through the tunnel to your right. To get past the Eye wait until it begins to move upward then walk underneath and jump on to the lift. When a spinning alien appears go up on the lift, through the tunnel and up the next lift.

Walk right and go up to shoot the flashing blocks. Shoot the bouncing ball without getting too close.

Now walk up the staircase avoiding the next Eye. Don't stop as you'll slip backwards. Go through the tunnel, and shoot the next ball immediately. Once you've gone up the next lift you'll find an Eye and a moving ball below you. Wait till the ball is bouncing away from you then drop down and shoot it when it returns.

Once you're past the Eye, walk to the end and fall through several dissolving ledges to get to the next lift.

At the top of the lift jump right over a dissolving ledge and go through the tunnel. When you reach the last tunnel wait for the spinning alien to appear before walking to the finish door.

2: REALM OF ROBOTS
When you reach the first robot go up the lift next to it and wait until it moves down before jumping over. The next few robots are fairly straightforward to pass. The fourth one requires good timing to jump over. Alternatively you can wait on the ledge next to it and a spinning alien will come along and knock you down a

...us Players Guide

special is that when Pogo climbs the tower rotates. The 3D scrolling has to be seen to be believed.

Right, over to John Phillips for his tips.

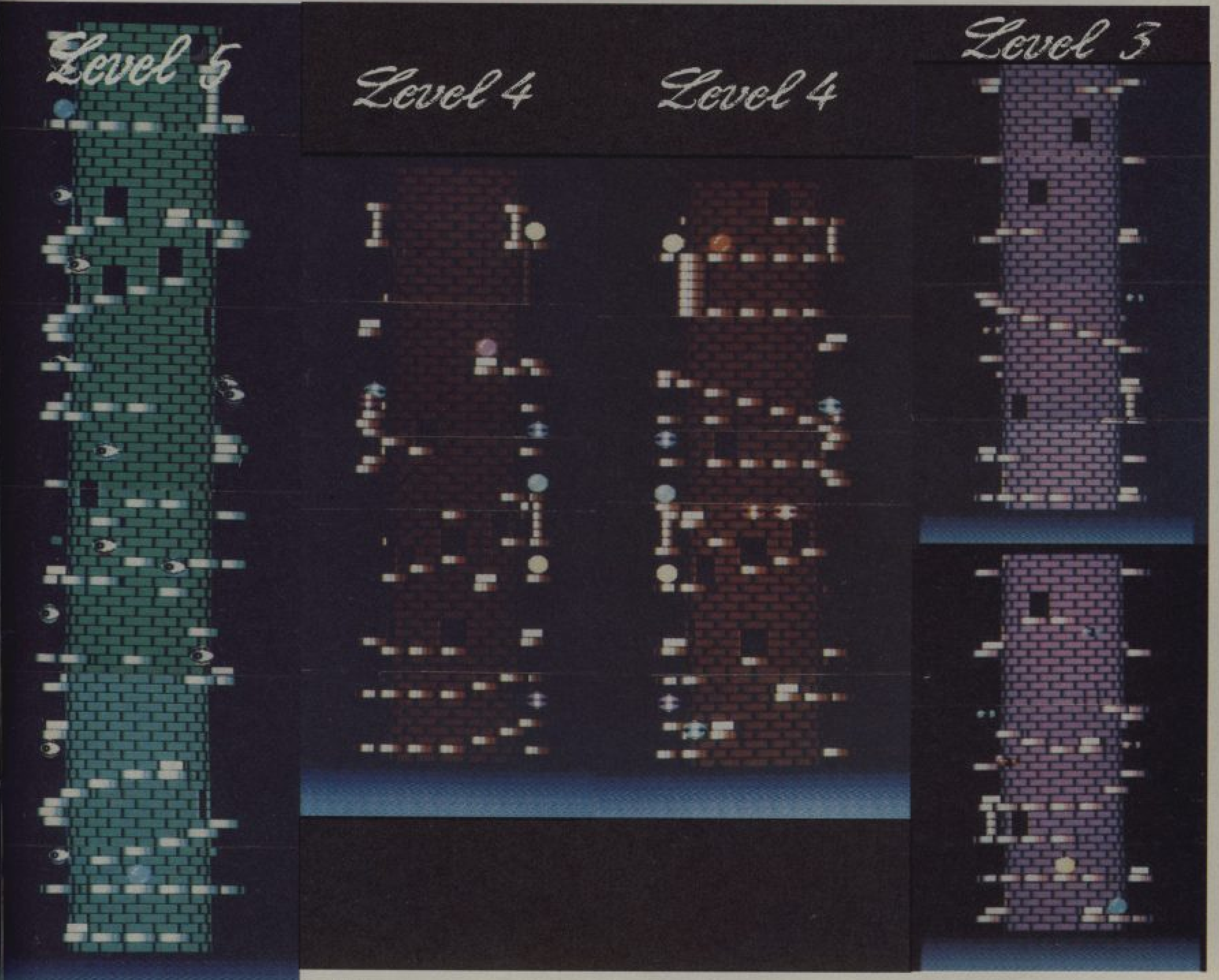
General Hints and Tips

● The key to completing a tower is to learn the most efficient route to the finish. For the first few towers this is straightforward. However, the later towers give several choices, some of which lead to dead ends. Make a map.

● Make a note of where the dissolving ledges are. Some need to be avoided by jumping over them. Others have to be fallen through to get anywhere.

● One of the main hazards are the spinning aliens which fly across the screen. These can easily be avoided by careful use of the tunnels. If one appears when you near a tunnel entrance, wait until the alien is fairly close to you then walk into the tunnel. By the time you come out the other side you should have avoided it. The spinning aliens usually appear when there aren't many other aliens around so you should be able to predict their appearance.

● Shoot all of the bouncing balls and flashing blocks as you'll get an extra bonus for each on completion of a tower. You also get technique bonuses if you don't get knocked off ledges.



level. You can then walk under the robot.

Go up the lift and straight through the next tunnel. Go up the next lift but this time avoid the tunnel as there's nothing on the other side. The final lift is under a dissolving ledge.

3: TRAP OF TRICKS

This may seem impossible at first sight as you can't go anywhere walking through the tunnel and using the first lift. Try moving to the right and then waiting.

Further up there's a lift blocked by several flashing blocks. Go left around the tower to remove these but look out for the alien further up before using the lift. To negotiate the series of tunnels wait until the alien is coming towards you.

4: SLIPPERY SLIDE

Once you've gone up the first lift, shoot the flashing block to your right before moving left. To remove the flashing blocks further up you'll have to go through several tunnels.

5: BROKEN PATH

Go right up the first lift and once past the bouncing ball shoot the flashing block to your left before dropping down to the next lift. When you reach two lifts under dissolving blocks drop on to the first lift (but don't use it).

Shoot the flashing blocks and drop right on to the staircase. Go up again and jump over to the second lift. When you've used this continue left until you're between two aliens. Shoot the flashing block then jump to the right of the aliens. Drop down to the right on to the next lift.

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CAPTAIN BLOOD

We are all used to seeing adverts full of cliches like "*stretches the ST to the limits*" and claims such as "*the best graphics yet seen on a computer*". In most cases such claims prove to be little more than marketing hype, and these days people take less notice of bold statements in adverts or on the package, and quite rightly so.

However, if you see any superlatives used in conjunction with a new ST and Amiga release entitled **Captain Blood**, they may well be true.

Blood is the creation of **Didier Bouchon** of **Ere Informatique**, publishers of *Crafton (Get Dexter), Doomsday Blues*, and a brace of other titles over the past three years.

It all started when a down-on-his-luck games programmer named Bob Morlock, bumped into Charles Darwin in the street. Later, over a drink, they get talking about aliens.

It turns out that aliens have been here all the time... in computer games. As Darwin put it: "They're here. Pac-people are reproducing in millions. They actually exist".

While Morlock was still trying to absorb the enormity of this revelation, Darwin got up and left, never to be seen again. It was then that Morlock vowed to program a new masterpiece in which he would create a superbeing to save the universe from the aliens.

Six months later he had created the ARK, a vessel with an on-board computer called Bio-Consciousness. The Ark was placed under Bob Morlock's computer double – Captain Blood.

Blood's mission was to fight evil in all the computerised universe.

Finally the day came to enter the final momentous instruction: RUN. Then Bob Morlock disappeared...

Captain Blood looked out on what appeared to be the Andromeda system. The inside of the Ark was lovingly done up by the program, exactly as Morlock had coded it.

Just then Blood noticed a large number of menacing looking blips heading towards the centre of the radar display, ie. straight for the Ark. Honk, the Ark's Bio-Consciousness computer, confirmed they were being attacked by a pack of fifth generation invader fighters.

There was only one thing to do: get the hell out of there, and fast. Just as the Ark plunged into hyperspace, it was rocked by a gigantic explosion.

Light years away, the Ark floated around serenely while Honk assessed the damage. It turned out that, due to the explosion, the multiplexer had failed during the jump, resulting in the creation, and subsequent dispersal of, at least thirty exact clones of Captain Blood.

The worst news, though, was that the cloning process triggered a gradual degeneration in the original Blood. His only hope was to travel the galaxy in search of all the clones in order to recover his vital life fluid.

In the meantime Honk was busy creating a number of bionic supports designed to back up Blood's failing life system. One after the other, his vital bits would be replaced by artificial organs.

"Blood struggled courageously against a formidable force summoning him to become a wholly synthetic being: a robot".

During the next 800 years Blood managed to find all but five of his clones. Some time ago now, his task was helped enormously by the discovery of a female Oorxx. This fish-like creature spends its entire existence roaming the universe, although nobody is quite sure why.

Anyway, this particular Oorxx was obviously in some distress because it was sending out an SOS



message when Blood happened upon it. So the unfortunate Oorxx was duly teleported into the Ark's Frigitorium (it was forbidden to teleport creatures abroad unless they were in a temporary cryogenic death state).

It was during Honk's initial examintion of the now frozen Oorzz that he made his all important discovery. It turned out that, with a tiny bit of genetical tinkering, Honk could alter the Oorxx's eggs and produce a whole new generation of Oorxx bio-missiles.

The baby Oorxxs could then be trained to land on planets and go on suicide missions for Blood, who would be able to see through their eyes and control them remotely from the safety of his padded armchair in the Ark, which itself was far too bulky to land anywhere... so much for Morlock's programming!

During the ensuing centuries, Blood was able to visit countless planets, using the Oorxx. He met many aliens, some friendly, some distinctly hostile. Blood was able to communicate with all these aliens using UPCOM, Universal Protocol/Communication. UPCOM was conceived by Honk to overcome the difficulties of conversing with people – and things! – who used different lanugages.

Honk's ingenious system uses icons to signify words or ideas. In all there are 128 icons in the system, which automatically highlights for use, those that it senses will be understood by the being you're talking to. This also allows for a quick assessment of what type of creature you're dealing with.

Just as on Earth, there was always some creature that needed a favour, perhaps some information or even a lift to a neighbouring star system.

Of course, when there are clones to be found, you never do something for nothing, and Blood traded favours for information which, he hoped, would lead him to yet more of his elusive clones he is seeking.

making, *Captain Blood* is an adventure, arcade, and strategy game all round into one massive universe. Those parts that are already playable are simply awesome.

On a recent trip to France to see how the project was progressing, I was taken on a whistle-stop tour of one of the game's many galaxies. We saw countless planets, each with its own distinctive land-masses, seas, and mountains, woven into a fractal generated tapestry of colour.

When you go down onto a planet you are presented with a first person view of mountains, canyons and hills – it's as smooth as any commercial flight simulator.

After playing Captain Blood for four hours I was left totally drained, just like the feeling you get after seeing a really moving or engrossing film.

This could be the title to finally persuade you to splash out on an Amiga. If you already have one then don't let *Captain Blood* pass you by.

PREVIE

mega-machine supplement

● 1987 has definitely been the year 16 bit machines came of age, although sadly the same cannot be said of all 16 bit programmers. There are still too many weak conversions of average eight bit games dropping onto my desk. The success stories this year have mostly been about companies brave enough to forego the financial security of having an eight bit version in the bag first.

English Software's *Q-Ball* **Audiogenic's** *Impact,* **Microdeal's** *Goldrunner,* **Psygnosis'** *Terrorpods,* **Mirrorsoft's** *Defender of the Crown,* **Tynesoft's** *Plutos,* **Infogrammes'** *TNT,* **Electronic Art's** *Deluxe* series, and **Rainbird's** *Starglider* are all programs that are only available on, or were first released for, 16 bit machines.

The encouraging news for the ST and Amiga owner, is that not only are more publishers entering the 16 bit arena, but a greatly increased percentage of their forthcoming releases are 16 bit only projects.

This is good news for programmers who can finally let their creative hair down and show us what they're really capable of. It is great news for Atari and Commodore who are, after all, reliant to a greater or lesser degree, on third party software support to sell their machines.

But most of all, it is excellent news for the buying public who, during the coming twelve months, are likely to be treated to a steady flow of high quality games that stretch the ST and Amiga to the limit.

● For anyone who hasn't yet decided what they're going to give their ST or Amiga for Christmas, pin back your wallets and come with us on a journey through 16 bitland. Whether it's Xmas pressies you're after, or ways to spend all that lovely Christmas lolly, stick with us for **the** definitive run-down on the latest (and some of the late) ST and Amiga goodies.

● First stop is **Activision**, one of the first companies to produce 16 bit games. The American games giant are due to release a number of titles over the coming months. Most notable amongst these are **Knightmare** (ST), based on the TV program of the same name, **Enduro Racer** (ST), **Rampage** (ST), and **Thexdor** (ST/Am), designed by **Game Arts** in Japan where it is reputed to have sold in excess of 500,000 copies.

● Watch out also for a new **Infocom** title called **Border Zone**, yet another adventure from Activision's prolific sister company, this time set in East Germany on the Berlin Wall at Checkpoint Charlie. . . . heavy stuff!

● **Addictive Games** is releasing **The Eye** (ST), based on the board game of the same name, and should have the ST version of **Football Manager** ready soon.

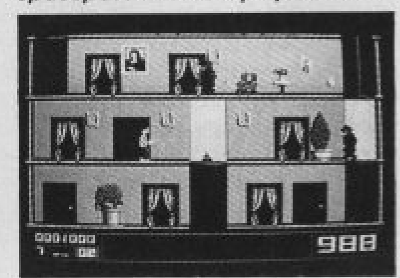
● Budget merchant **Anco** is chipping in with three Amiga stocking fillers all priced £9.95. They are **The Final Trip, Vader**, both vertical shooters, and **Dr. Fruit**, a cross between *Boulderdash* and *Dig Dug*. Anco has also released their first Gold Range game entitled **Sky Fighter**, yet another vertical shoot-em-up, this time for £14.95.

● Fans of **Arcana's** excellent trivia board game **Power Play** will be pleased to hear of its imminent arrival for the ST and Amiga. The Bristol based company is also releasing a three-part space shooter called **Mars Cops** sometime early in the new year.

● By now **Argus Press's** submarine simulation, **The Hunt For Red October** (ST/Am) should be on the streets. Based on **Tom Clancy's** novel of the same name, the game casts you as the commander of Russia's most advanced missile submarine, Red October, which is heading for the US to defect. Your mission is to rendezvous with the American navy – although the Russians have other ideas!

● **Argus** is also releasing **Terromex** (ST) and **Pacland** (ST/Am), through their subsiduary **Quicksilva**. Licensed from the Nanco/Atari coin-op, **Pacland** is a cartoon style arcade is set on Pac's home island where he resolves to help a lost fairy make her way home to fairyland. All together now, aaaaaaaaahhhh!

● Putney based **Ariolasoft** is entering the 16 bit stage via the back door with a couple of German imports from **Micro Partner**, both priced £19.99. **Mission Elevator** (ST/Am) is an upbeat version of the eight bit hit, while **Spaceport** is a rip-off of the old Synapse C64 game, **Fort Apocalypse**. Unfortunately *Spaceport* is far less playable than

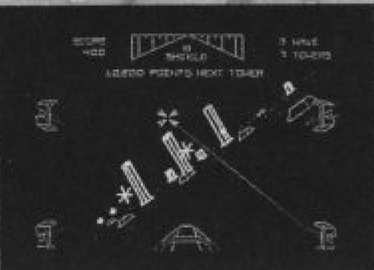


its four-year-old predecessor.

● **Cascade** will soon be launching ST conversions of its two most recent games, **Ace II** and **Implosion**, while **Codemasters** has promised **BMX, Pool,** and **Grand Prix Simulators** on both formats before the end of the year.

● **C.D.S.** has released conversions of **Brian Clough's Football Fortunes** (ST/Am), the board and computer game sports simulation that supposedly puts *Football Manager* in the shade.

● Meanwhile **Domark** are gearing themselves up for the release of **Star Wars** (ST/Am), based on

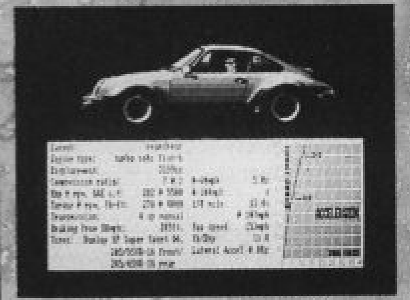


everybody's fave coin-op. The preview version looks pretty good, and plays and sounds just like the original, even down to the sampled speech.

● **Tonic Tiles** is yet another *Breakout* clone, this time programmed in France and released over here by **The Edge**. *Tiles* features arguably the best graphics and animation of all such clones so far.

● The mighty **Electronic Arts** is putting the final touches to two new 16 bit titles. **Ferrari Formula One** (Am) is a detailed driving simulation that allows you, not only to race a Ferrari F1/86 around 16 of the world's greatest tracks, but also to monitor and control tyres, suspension, wing settings, turbo boost, even the chips, used in the engine management system.

Although not yet finished, Ferrari looks like being an accurate and graphically very impressive arcade simulation, suitable for budding Mansells everywhere.

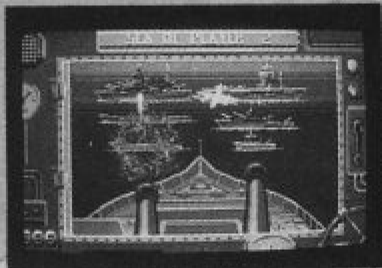


EA's second new release is **Test Drive** (ST/Am). This **Accolade** production puts you behind the wheel of five of the world's fastest and flashyest road cars, from a Porsche 911 turbo to a Ferrari Testarossa. Each car's dashboard is lovingly reproduced in exact detail, and the programmers claim to have reproduced the handling of each car as well.

As with *Ferrari Formula One*, this game is graphically superb, although the road gets fairly monotonous after a while. This is a game for freaks who want to see how far they can push some of the world's greatest cars, not for those looking for another *Pole Position*.

Good news also for Amiga Artists. EA has brought the price of **Deluxe Paint II** down to a very reasonable £69.95. Upgrading from *DPaint I* to *DPaint II* will only cost you £29.95.

● **Elite** has four 16 bit titles on the tops, including the classic **Space Harrier** (ST) which is already at playable demo stage and looking good. **Battleships** (ST/Am), **Buggy Boy** (ST) should be available soon, and you can expect **Thundercats** early next year. Watch out for full reviews of some of Elite's games in next month's ST and Amiga special.



● Following on from the success of their first ST game **Q-Ball** (now also available for the Amiga), **English Software** has released an Amiga version of their eight bit hit, **Leviathan**. Easier controls, ehanced graphics and sound effects, together with a haunting drum beat in the background make this easily the best version yet of English's diagonal scroller.

After the disappointing **Golden Path** and the farce surrounding the launch, or otherwise, of **Star**



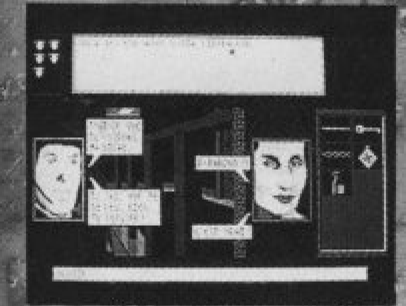
Trek, Firebird is in need of a few 16 bit hits to re-establish some form of credibility. Fortunately for them, Firebird own the rights to probably the best game of 1987, **Sentinel** which has now been released for the ST. Anyone who has not played this game doesn't know what they're missing.

Watch out also for ST versions of **Bubble Bobble, Pandora**, and **Flying Shark**, together with new titles, **Black Lamp** and **Sidewise** – which is being programmed by **Steve Bak** of **Goldrunner** fame.

● After the rather disappointing **3D Galax**, it is to be hoped that **Gremlin**'s forthcoming ST releases will be more impressive. In the



pipeline are **Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer, Alternative World Games**, and **Blood Valley**- based on the **Duelmaster** fantasy books by **Mark Smith** and **Jamie Thompson** of *Way of the Tiger* fame. Also on the way are

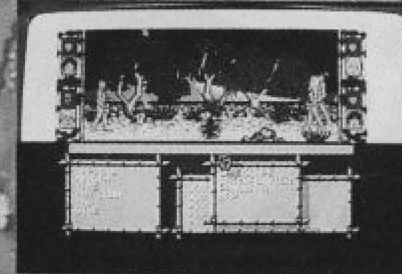


Deflektor and **Night Raider** described by Gremlin as "the ultimate flight simulator/shoot 'em-up"!

● **Infogrammes** and its sister company **Ere Informatique**, have been steadily building up a catalogue of 16 bit titles over the past year. One of their first releases was **Grafton and Xunk** (sometimes known as **Get Dexter**), and now Grafton II – **Crystal Angel** is almost ready for release.

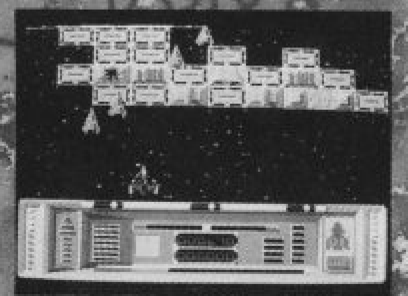
Set on a strange new planet, you will visit temples, houses, cottages, and underground caverns, as well as roam around lush, plant covered, gardens. This is one of those isometric arcade adventures where almost everything moves or does something useful or dangerous. **Grafton II** is far more playable than its predecessor, with many more locations, more puzzles, and no little humour. Watch out for a full review of this and news of another Infogrammes release, **Crash Garett**, in next month's C+VG.

● Another French company, **Loriciels**, are releasing **Sapiens** (ST), a beautifully presented graphical adventure which, according to the press release "has more than three million different sites, obtained by developing algorithms of fractal vision in perspective". A nice feature with this game is the ability



to create a second character who will follow and fight alongside you, under computer control. A second human player can take over the control of this character at any time.

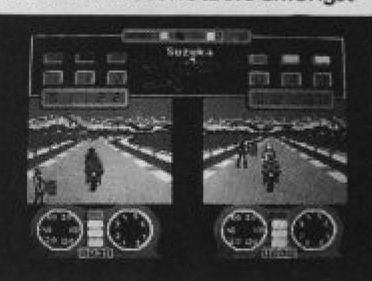
Sapiens is set in prehistoric times. It appears there is a drought and members of your tribe are dropping like flies. To succeed in the game, you must take on the mantle of a valiant hunter and



conquer new and hostile lands in order to feed your tribe.

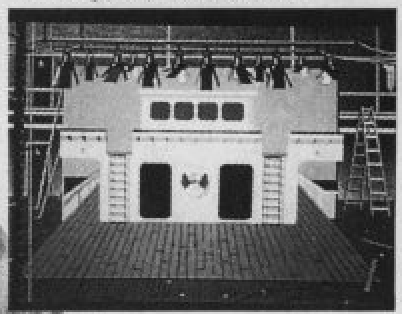
● Other Loriciel releases include **Grand Prix 500**, the ST conversion of their Amstrad split screen motorbike game, and **Bob Winner** (ST), a combat orientated arcade adventure set against digitised backgrounds of Paris, London and New York.

One of the most prolific English companies in the 16 bit market is **Microdeal** who plan to launch a handful of new titles either side of Christmas. Most notable amongst



these are **Insanity Run** (Am), a full screen vertical shoot 'em-up with plenty of flashing colours, great graphic design and lots of things of various sizes to blast at and kill. In February, Microdeal plan to launch a construction set which allows players to build their own *Insanity Run* game.

Other seasonal offerings from Microdeal include **Fright Night**, a horror game, licenced from



Columbia Pictures, and which, we're told, is best played in the dark. If you don't fancy a spot of gore, try **Leathernecks**– it's a *Commando*-style arcade shoot 'em-up with superb sampled sound effects. There's also ST **Soccer** for sports freaks, or **Tanglewood**, a two disk adventure boasting over 700k of graphics, and mouse controlled, text-free interaction.

● After selling hundreds of copies of an unfinished version of **Backlash** (ST) at this year's PCW show, **Novagen** promised the game, in its final form, would be released not long after. Hopefully, by the time you read this, you will have had a chance to sample the delights of this superfast, though mindless arcade blast.

● **U.S. Gold** has released a slick looking submarine simulator called **Blue War**, in which you get the chance to captain a U39 sub and its 35 crew. Your mission is to seek out and destroy as many enemy ships and subs as you can. The game features many graphically



excellent screens, full of instruments, dials, and a host of icon driven controls.

The ST version of the very addictive **Solomons Key** should be available by December, but early next year **U.S. Gold** is really brining out the big guns with **Gauntlet II** (ST/Am) and **Outrun** (ST/Am), both expected before Easter. Other titles to look out for include **Charlie Chaplin, Trantor, Captain America, Wizard Worz, Handball, Impossible Mission II,** and **California Games**, reputed to be Epyx's best selling game of all time.

● Another new recruit to the swelling ranks of 16 bitters are **Virgin Games**. We can expect to see at least three titles from Richard Branson's software arm next year. First out around Feb time should be **Deluxe Scrabble**, a souped up version of the original Psion/Liesure Genius release. They have also acquired the rights to the hugely successful board game **Scruples**, and versions should be out some time before the end of the year, and look out for a full review of this one soon.



COMING SOON... RAINBIRD

Atari ST version

DICK SPECIAL: The Search for Spook by Solid Software. Cartoon graphics of TV quality. Dick Special is the first fully animated computer generated character. Join Dick in his search for Spook the dog, avoid hazards and solve infuriating visual puzzles. Graphics and gameplay are out of this world. Play it and you still won't believe it.

Amiga version

Atari ST version

JINXTER by Magnetic Scrolls. Jinxter is destined to be another magical hit from Magnetic Scrolls. Full of charm and humour, this bewitching adventure will enthral you with its breathtaking graphics, imaginative puzzles and sophisticated parser.

Atari ST version

UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR by Intergalactic Development. Enter a world of Battle Strategy and re-enact some of the world's greatest military conflicts such as Hastings or Waterloo on a sophisticated 3D landscape. Create your own scenarios, or even pit two armies from any time period against each other; the combinations of battle are almost infinite.

TIME AND MAGIK by Level 9. Three outstanding adventures in the Time and Magik trilogy comprising Lords of Time, Red Moon and Price of Magik. Featuring an advanced parser with easy to use commands as well as captivating digitised graphics on most disc versions.

CARRIER COMMAND by Realtime Software. At the helm of a futuristic aircraft carrier equipped with fighter planes and amphibious tanks, battle to overthrow the enemy by conquering a huge island complex. An addictive game of strategic warfare, frenetic arcade action and stunning 3D graphics.

Atari ST version

	AMIGA	ATARI	IBM PC	MAC	APPLE II	AMSTRAD				ATARI		COMMODORE		SPECTRUM		MSX
		ST	Cmptbls	512/Plus		PCW	CPC 6128	CPC 464/ 664/6128	CPC 464/ 664/6128	800/130	800/130	64/128	64/128	128	48/128	
	DISC	DISC	DISC	DISC	DISC	DISC	DISC	DISC	TAPE	DISC	TAPE	DISC	TAPE	TAPE	TAPE	TAPE
UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR	24.95	24.95	24.95													
JINXTER	24.95	24.95	24.95	34.95	19.95	24.95	19.95			19.95		19.95				
CARRIER COMMAND	24.95	24.95	24.95	34.95		24.95		19.95	14.95						14.95	
TIME AND MAGIK	19.95	19.95	19.95	29.95	19.95	19.95		19.95	14.95	14.95	14.95	17.95	14.95		14.95	14.95
DICK SPECIAL 'The Search for Spook'	24.95	24.95														

All prices are correct at the time of going to press

XOR

▸ **MACHINE: ATARI ST**
▸ **SUPPLIER: HEWSON**
▸ **PRICE: £19.95**
▸ **REVIEWER: DAVID**

Described as the ultimate maze challenge, XOR has been delighting and frustrating Beeb owners for many months. Now XOR is available for the C64 and Atari ST.

The game consists of 15 graded mazes, each more cunning than the last. By completing each of the first fourteen mazes, you will get fourteen letters that form an anagram. But all is not as it seems as these letters are also coded, thus perhaps A=E or C=H. It is only by completing the final maze, that the code is revealed, giving you a chance to solve the anagram.

In each maze, you control two shields, that can be moved under certain conditions, dictated by the other elements in the maze.

Each shield starts in a different part of the maze, and you often have to bring the two together, so that they can work in harmony to solve some of the trickier logic problems.

Your task is the same in all the mazes, and requires you to collect every mask of XOR you find. This may sound easy, but with the exception of maze number one, it requires ever increasing powers of logical deduction as you progress through the game.

Some of the elements in the mazes include ducks, that will always move towards the left when they are free to do so, and fish that will always drop downwards – the vertical equivalent to ducks!

There are also bombs that can be dropped on other maze elements, causing a digitised, three block wide, explosion. It is vital to master the use of the bombs, because it is all too easy to blow up a mask by mistake.

Other mazes are populated by weightless dolls that can be pushed in any direction, and all contain blocks that can only be passed through in certain directions.

The graphics, and movement in XOR are rather similar to *Boulder Dash*, but any real similarity between the two games ends here. As you move about the maze, the screen follows you, scrolling as you reach the edges of the game window.

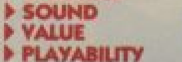
To the right of the window is a smaller map display which is empty at the start of the maze. Later, you will find tokens, each containing information for one quarter of the maze, which is now displayed in the map window.

The map shows the maze walls together with all the masks yet to be collected.

Below the map window is the status window where you can see which shield you are controlling, as well as the moves taken so far, and the number of shields collected.

Although there is no limit, each maze must be completed in less than 2001 moves, no mean task in the higher mazes where there is very little margin for deviating off the best route.

This is the definitive maze and problem solving game, and will certainly appeal to anyone who revels in a challenge, even the most committed arcader.

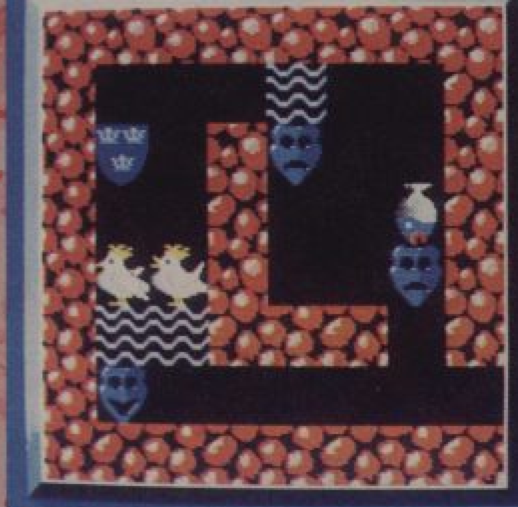


▸ GRAPHICS	8
▸ SOUND	8
▸ VALUE	9
▸ PLAYABILITY	10











RANARAMA

▸ **MACHINE: ATARI ST**
▸ **SUPPLIER: HEWSON**
▸ **PRICE: £19.95**
▸ **REVIEWER: DAVID**

You may well have played Ranarama on a 8 bit system, or perhaps you remember the amazing yellow and blue frog in the ads. Either way, you will be pleased to hear that Hewson has marked its entry into the 16 bit arena with an excellent conversion of this arcade/fantasy adventure.

For the uninitiated, you play the part of the miserable apprentice sorcerer Mervyn, who has unwittingly turned himself into a frog while trying to brew a potion to improve his hideous looks. As if this wasn't enough, he has also just managed to escape from an invasion of warlocks, who have take over all his lovely dungeons.

The only way out of his unfortunate predicament is for Mervyn to blast his way down to the lowest dungeon, destroying all the warlocks en route.



It is only by reaching the lowest dungeon, and defeating the most evil warlock of all in ritual magic combat, that he stands an unearthly chance of finding the right potion to turn him back into his original ghastly self.

The rooms of each dungeon are viewed in close up from above *Gauntlet* style, but only appear once you enter them. The game starts in the top dungeon where things soon start to hot up. First there are hoardes of evil creatures, brought into existence to guard the warlocks.

Then there are the generators that create vicious weapons such as spinning knives, and finally there are the warlocks themselves.

As luck would have it, some rooms have symbols engraved into the stone floor. Called Floor Glyphs, they come in four varieties being the Glyphs of Seeing, Travel, Power and Sorcery.

The Glyph of Seeing gives you a map of all rooms and doors (including invisible ones) thus far explored; it even shows you the position of the warlocks.

Travel gives you a side view of the dungeon and allows you the opportunity of traveling up or down to another level.

Using the Glyph of Power unleashes a powerful bolt of energy fatal to most creatures that are likely to be in the room with you.

The Glyph of Sorcery is the key to increasing your magic powers, both offensive and defensive. There are four types of magic spell – Power, Offence, Defence, and Affect. You start the game with weak version of each and, by defeating Warlocks, you can collect enough runes to upgrade the potency of the spells while on a Sorcery Glyph, giving you at least a fighting chance on the nastier levels to come.

As you would expect from a Hewson game, the graphics have been upgraded and enlarged to make full use of the ST's extra facilities.

For a game of this type, the action is surprisingly fast, although you'll need to plan and map your way through the deeper dungeons to stand any real chance of success.

Ranarama ST is an impeccably coded, finely balanced mixture of arcade and fantasy adventure.

A thinking person's game, but one which will delight all devotees of the genre. It's well worth checking it out.

▸ GRAPHICS	8
▸ SOUND	9
▸ VALUE	9
▸ PLAYABILITY	9


BUBBLE GHOST
An eerie, ghostly tale of an unsettled spirit trying hard to find it's rest. In order to find it's peace, the ghost's soul, in the form of a bubble, must be blown through successive rooms avoiding the myriad of obstacles precariously placed to impede its progress.
Computer & Video Games
..addictive and fun to play...
ST User
..beautifully designed screens..
..a game for all the family.
ST World
..fresh humour and originality..
..a state of the art arcade game.
Bubble Ghost
ATARI 520/1040 ST
INFOGRAMES
TRAUMA
Space Barbarians are coming and it's you that has to stop them, scything thru advancing hoardes en route to galactic domination. But you've gone for the jugular and attacked the very heart of their home and power base.
TRAUMA
3 GREAT ARCADE HITS
ERE INFORMATIQUE
ERE INFORMATIQUE
ARCADE ACTION
PHOENIX
You control the Phoenix and have to open space routes which have remained closed since the earliest Space Wars Speeding across fast disappearing lanes avoiding booby traps and energy loss zones blasting through oncoming obscure missiles This is your mission
It's fast, exciting and dangerous
Popular Computing Weekly
Exhiliarating!.
..Phoenix is for those with only the fastest of reactions and sharpest of minds'
ST World
Phoenix is...a test of your reflexes, resolve and perspicacity
Computer & Video Games
An easy game to get into, a hard one to put down.
INFOGRAMES
MITRE HOUSE, ABBEY ROAD,
ENFIELD, MIDDX EN1 2RQ
tel 01-364 0123
All the above titles are available for the Atari ST

PHOENIX

- MACHINE: ATARI ST
- SUPPLIER: ERE INFORMATIQUE/ INFOGRAMMES
- PRICE: £19.95
- REVIEWER: DAVID

As the pilot of a Phoenix AY 21 space thingy, you have been given the day off... tomorrow. Today, however, you've got some cleaning up to do. It seems that someone, somewhere wants the old space highways re-opened and muggins has got the job.

Back in the old days highways weren't the serene, safe places of today. No, then the routes were booby-trapped and armed with laser turrets, not to mention black holes, magnetic zones and negative gamma particles.

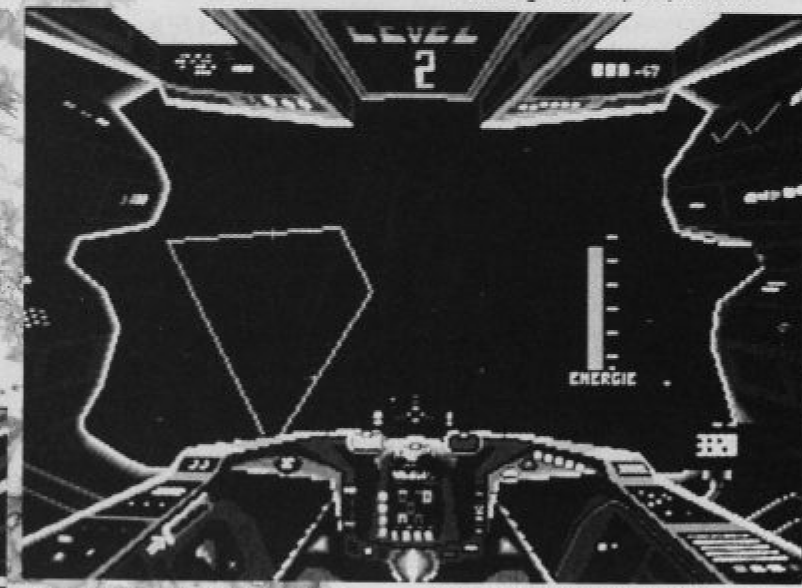
To save space, highways used to be built using the pipe principle. So, instead of all the lanes being layed out flat like an ordinary road, they were wrapped round onto the inside of a tube.

As you advance along each highway, the computer display divides each approaching section of road into tile-like vector-graphic sections, which represent the possible trajectories open to you. Miss these tiles and you'll end up in that great bathroom in the sky!

Although there are some tiles, such as energy giving red ones, that are actually worth steering over, most are to be avoided at all costs. Take purple tiles, for example, these friendly anti-matter zones will end your life in a flurry of sparks... no questions asked.

Then there are Green tiles which cause you to lose control for a few precious seconds, while blue tiles drain your energy.

Later stretches of highway contain tiles that spin round the inside of the tube... slick timing is required to get past these obstacles; of course, even if you



do, the chances are you'll get blasted to smithereens by a laser turret, or fall into one of the many black holes cunningly placed just where you don't want them.

So the object of the game is to steer the Phoenix around the insides of the highway tube, avoiding anything remotely dangerous, by side-stepping either to the right or left, so as to keep on the tiles.

Although sometimes you will be able to thwart danger by turning either clockwise or anti-clockwise, there will be many other times when you can only turn in one direction to stay alive, so perfecting a route through each level is essential.

If you die, you can use Phoenix's replay mode, courteousy of an in-flight video recorder.

Although some people have proclaimed vector graphics as a thing of the past, this style of presentation can still work when used properly, and Phoenix is a perfect example of a simple, though well thought out and neatly presented vector graphics arcade game which doesn't need filled graphics to make it fun to play.

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
VALUE	8
PLAYABILITY	10

DIABLO

- MACHINE: AMIGA, ATARI ST/C64
- SUPPLIER: ROBTEK/DIAMOND
- PRICE: £19.99 (AMIGA) £14.95 (ST) £9.95 (DISK) £7.95 (TAPE-C64)
- VERSION TESTED: AMIGA
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Robtek's software arm, Diamond Games has been guilty in the past of releasing sub-standard product such as their abysmal chess program *Checkmate*.

This time they have come up with an original and enjoyable little game that will appeal to many of the puzzlers amongst you.

Diablo is based on the old mosaic puzzle, which consists of a matrix of jumbled up tiles, each with a portion of a pattern or picture. The pattern can be restored by sliding the tiles either vertically or horizontally.

In *Diablo* the matrix is made up of 119 tiles, each containing two pieces of track. At the start of the game, a ball appears at the top of the screen, and starts rolling along the track.

Each time the ball rolls from one tile to the next, the track on the tile it has just left, disappears.

So, as the game progresses, there will some tiles still with two bits of track, others with one, and some will have been travelled over twice and will thus be "clean".

The aim of the game is to guide the ball over every piece of track, thus cleaning every tile on the screen. The problem is that not every piece of track links to another piece on an adjacent tile and, for the first part of each level, you must also stop the ball from rolling off the edge of the screen.

To do this you can manipulate tiles, just as in the original puzzle, by sliding them into the "tileless" square on the screen.

When you can see there is a long stretch of "joined up" track ahead, you can make the ball roll faster to save time, although it is all too easy to suddenly discover the ball has got nowhere to go with little or no time to do anything about it.

With plenty of screens, and a random track generator thrown in for good measure, *Diablo* should keep ST owners amused for long enough to justify the £14.95 price tag. But at £19.95 the Amiga version is not such good value. It's a lesson companies are going to have to learn if the Amiga is really going to take off as it should do. Let V.F.M. be the lesson.

That's Value For Money.

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	7
VALUE	7
PLAYABILITY	7

TRIVIAL PURSUIT

- MACHINE: ATARI ST
- SUPPLIER: DOMARK
- PRICE: £19.95
- VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST
- REVIEWER: DAVID

So often the computer version of a board games leaves you with the distinct impression that the original was far more fun anyway, so why did they bother. One notable exception to this rule was *Trivial Pursuit*, which is now available on the ST.

Although the success of the computer game has obviously been, in part, due to the amazing popularity of the original board game, the well thought out implementation and cute screen presentation together with the addition of music and picture questions have definitely helped give Domark a well deserved hit.

The ST version of *TP* is undoubtedly the best yet, containing all the features of the previous versions together with enhanced graphics and a new screen for the picture questions.

As before, the game features TP, your very own animated question master, the game board, two separate screens where the questions themselves are asked, and a chart showing how well each player is doing in each of the six different question categories.

The entire game is mouse controlled, leaving you free to sit back and enjoy yourself trying to answer 3000 questions you knew the answer to. . . afterwards!

Recommended for Christmas stockings everywhere.

- GRAPHICS 9
- SOUND 8
- VALUE 9
- PLAYABILITY 9







GRAND SLAM

- MACHINE: AMIGA
- SUPPLIER: PARADOX/EIDERSOFT
- PRICE: £24.95
- VERSION TESTED: AMIGA
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Back in the old days when the thing to have was a Vic 20, there existed a games machine called Intellevision, horrendously overpriced, but a brilliant piece of kit all the same. So what, you might ask, does that have to do with an Amiga tennis game? Well one of the most popular cartridges for the Intellevision console was the tennis game, a graphically pleasing and surprisingly playable little number.

At the risk of upsetting half the known universe, I still reckon that no tennis game since, with the possible exception of *Psion's Game, Set and Match*, has come close to bettering the Intellevision effort which is now seven years old; a surprising fact considering how many attempts there have been, and how popular the game of tennis has become.

But wait, a new tennis game appears on the horizon, and what's more it's on the Amiga. Surely this one must be worth netting for your Xmas software collection. Unfortunately, no. In fact to compare *Grand Slam* with the state of British tennis today is being unfair to British tennis.

Purporting to be 'the definitive tennis game', it features the four major Grand slam events of the international tennis calendar – Wimbledon, the French, Australian and U.S. Opens. As far as I can see, the only difference between the four is the colour of the court as grass changes to clay or concrete.

The court is viewed from behind the service line, and your player is always at the near end, and is moved about the court using the mouse. As the ball comes vaguely within range, you press the button to play a stroke. If you're lucky enough to make contact, the direction of your shot is determined by your relative position to the ball, together with the timing of your stroke.

This method of play and control would be OK if you could follow the ball clearly. Unfortunately, the movement of both the ball and the players is less than smooth, indeed both disappear completely with alarming regularity.

You try hitting an invisible ball with any degree of accuracy.

Infinity Software has made some kind of attempt to beef up the atmosphere of the game by adding digitised sound effects, but even this falls short of the standard one expects from an Amiga game.

If I was John McEnroe, the world famous temper tantrum of the tennis courts, I would say that this game is the pits. But I'm not and I don't want to get into any long legal battles either.

- GRAPHICS 6
- SOUND 7
- VALUE 6
- PLAYABILITY 4

NEXT ISSUE!

More from the mega-machine scene in the magazine that's always first with hot 16-bit hits! In the February issue of C+VG you'll find news of a mammoth project from **Palace** – the *Barbarian* people. Called **Starship** it's going to make your mind boggle! We'll also be reviewing the latest and greatest **Cinemaware** game, **King of Chicago,** looking at **Eco** from **Denton Designs** and, hopefully, the ST version of **Elite's** 8-bit hit, **Buggy Boy**.

Other reviews we're hoping to cram in are **Bad Cats**, **Star Wars**, **Insanity Flight**, **MidiMaze** and **Chamonix Challenge**. And, of course, anything else that crops up within the next few weeks.

So if you're a 16-bitter, or even just lust after one of the new generation of games machines, don't fail to get your hands on a copy of February's *Computer and Video Games*.



ONLY FROM SILICA

Finally, there's a personal computer that not only solves problems like other computers, but also solves the one problem that other computers have created. Affordability. Silica Shop are pleased to present the ST range of personal/business computers from Atari. The ST was designed utilizing the most recent breakthroughs in semiconductor technology, producing a personal computer that performs tasks with fewer parts. Which means it costs less to make. And less to buy. The latest ST computers now include built in power supplies and built in disk drives. The TOS operating system and GEM window environment are now on ROM chips which are already installed in the ST keyboard. This enables automatic instant booting when you switch on. Silica Shop are pleased to offer the complete Atari ST range. Our mail order department is situated in Sidcup and we have 3 retail outlets at Sidcup, Lion House (Tottenham Court Rd) and Selfridges (Oxford Street). We have eight years experience of Atari products, longer than any other UK company, and are well established as the UK's No.1 Atari specialist. With a group turnover of over £9 million and in excess of 80 staff, we offer you unbeatable service and support. We provide several facilities which you will find invaluable during your Atari computing life and most of these facilities are available **ONLY FROM SILICA**. We suggest that you read through what we have to offer, before you decide where to purchase your Atari ST.

FREE STARTER KIT - Only From Silica

When you purchase any Atari ST keyboard, you will not only receive the best value for money computer on the market, but you will also receive the following from Atari Corporation as part of the package:

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BUBBLE GHOST

▶ **MACHINE: ATARI ST**
▶ **SUPPLIER: INFOGRAMMES/ERE INFORMATIQUE**
▶ **PRICE: £19.95**
▶ **VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST**

Bubbles are definitely in at the moment. No sooner have we had Firebird's excellent *Bubble Bobble* than Infogrammes chip in with *Bubble Ghost*.

Luckily the two games have very little in common except that they both have the word 'bubble' in their title and are both fun to play.

In fact *Bubble Ghost* features one ghost, namely you, and one bubble. The bubble in question is your soul, which has unfortunately been separated from your body, if you can call it that. Your soul is so light and fragile that it has taken on the appearance of a bubble and, as bubbles do, it will burst when prodded, or even touched, by anything sharp.

The scene is a giant old castle, decked out with the latest in surrealist high-tech equipment bristling with sharp edges. Unlike your soul, you can move through any of the objects in the castle's rooms without danger. The only way you can be reunited with your soul is to blow the bubble out of the castle, by guiding it past all the nasty bits in each of the many rooms.

Each room is seen from the side, the graphics being simple but effective for this type of game. The rooms are variously decked out with futuristic looking heads, pointed lances that go in and out of the walls, and crystals (sharped-edge of course) that pulsate, growing and then shrinking, inviting you to try and pass them before they grow again.

Many of the hazards can be removed by cunningly blowing in the right place. Take fans, for example. These have an annoying tendency of blowing your bubble off course, invariably into something pointed. A quick puff on a fan's power pack will take the wind out of its sails for good, allowing you to pass safely.

Other 'blowable' hazzards include trumpets and candles. Wherever you find a trumpet, there's a fair chance that the room contains a seemingly impassable object or hazzard. By 'blowing your own trumpet' the chances are that you can remove [illegible] the hazzard leaving you [illegible] exit the room.

As you get deeper into the castle, better timing and [illegible] reactions are required to negotiate paths [illegible] narrower, [illegible] more and more [illegible] objects, hazzards [illegible] problems.

Although control is a mixture of mouse and keyboard the combination works very well here.

What you do is move the ghost round the room with your mouse, using the left and right buttons to rotate it either clockwise or anti-clockwise. Being a ghost, you are impervious to all the sharp edges which are so damaging to the bubble, so you can move freely, passing through objects and hazzards in true ghostlike fashion.

To blow the bubble, you simply position the ghost alongside it and press the 'shift' button. The bubble will then be blown away from the ghost. Thus, if you want to blow the bubble up, you must position the ghost below it, pointing upwards before blowing.

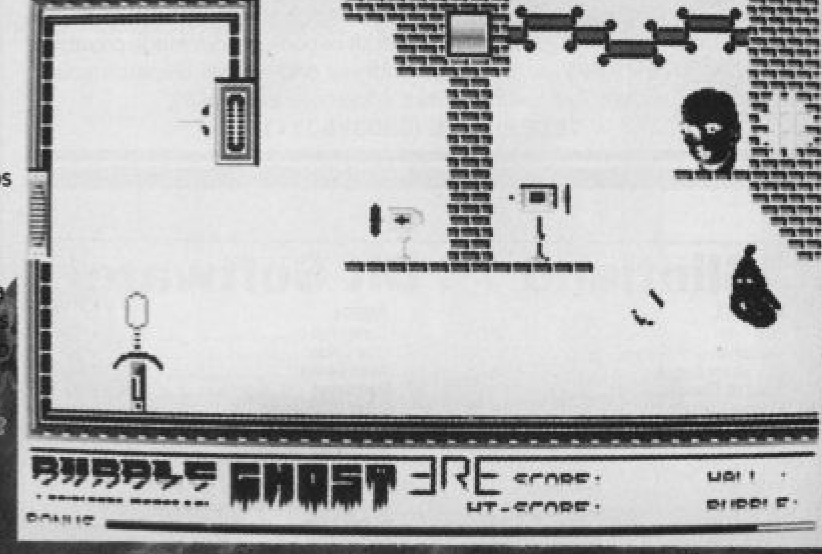
The jelly-like animation of the bubble, as it floats across the screen is superb, and when it pops it actually looks like a bursting bubble. The ghost character is equally impressive, especially immediately following the loss of a bubble when it frowns and puts its hands on its hips accusingly, as if to say "you careless wally!"

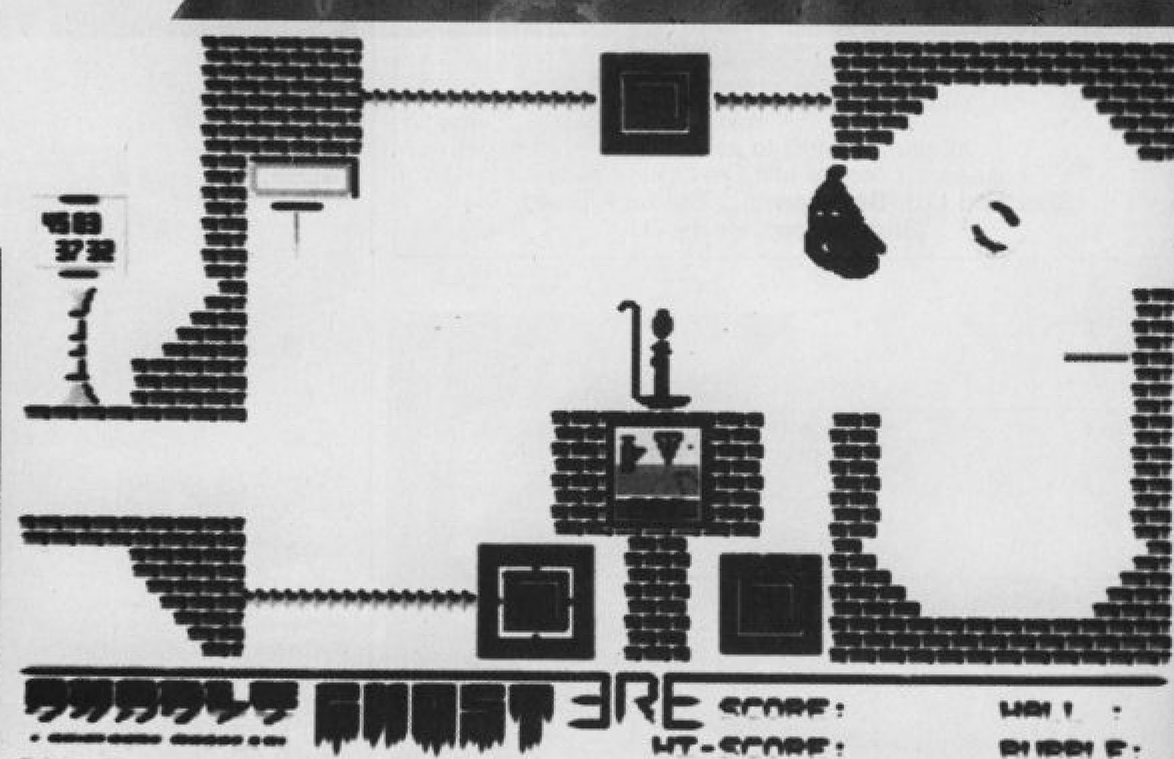
The general room graphics are good but not stunning, but the sound effects are definitely above average for the ST. A status line along the bottom of the screen shows your score, lives remaining, room number, and high score.

One final point of interest about this game is its apparent popularity with women. For whatever reason, *Bubble Ghost* seems to appeal to female gamers. I'm not suggesting for one minute, that games should be tailored to the tastes of one sex or the other, but it is nice to see a game that has no violence or death and yet is still fun to play. Sadly most games, programmed and/or released in the UK, don't fall into this category because it's not what the predominantly male market wants, or are conditioned to want by TV and the major software publishers.

Anyway, although simple, *Bubble Ghost* is one of those games that doesn't necessarily need blood, bombs, or mega graphics to make it work. Novel gameplay and ease of control make this one addictive and fun to play, although the £19.95 price tag is a bit on the steep side.

▶ GRAPHICS	7
▶ SOUND	8
▶ VALUE	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	9





DARK CASTLE

- MACHINE: AMIGA
- SUPPLIER: MIRRORSOFT/THREE-SIXTY
- PRICE: £29.95
- VERSION TESTED: AMIGA
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Earlier this year, some of Accolade's star programmers defected to form a new company called Three-Sixty. One of their first offerings is *Dark Castle*, an arcade adventure which may prove to be the definitive platforms and ladders game for the Amiga.

From the moment you load *Dark Castle*, it is obvious that a great deal of time has been lavished not only on the game itself, but on all the trimmings that serve to give it a really classy feel.

Each room in the castle is full of every kind of creature from rats to flying monkeys, from magic brooms to whip henchmen, and from burning eyes to kamikaze vultures.

Sprinkle liberally with guards, trap doors, keys, ten ton weights, swinging ropes, ladders, magic shields, falling stalactites, rocks to throw, chains to pull, elixirs to drink, add the best collection of stereo sampled sound effects this side of reality, and you have the perfect recipe for a superb romp through fifteen of the toughest, but most addictive screens you could ever hope to see on the Amiga.

Having played and died a handful of times it's worth watching the running demo and the "info" slide-show, designed to explain the somewhat complicated controls. Then it's off to the Castle again for a spot more Black Knight bashing, this time prudently selecting 'beginner' from the options at the bottom of the screen.

The drawbridge drops, letting you enter the castle antechamber. From here doors lead off in four directions and stairs lead upwards.

Although you can decide which way you want to go from the antechamber, in the end it doesn't matter because you'll still have to fight your way through all fourteen rooms before you get a crack at the Knight.

Controls are via a mixture of mouse and keyboard, and can be very confusing to begin with. But the game itself makes it worth perservering and you should get used to the movements after half an hour or so.

Each room has its own set of problems and resident creatures. In one, for instance, a whip henchman is dishing out 100 lashes to three unfortunate prisoners, chained to the wall. Beyond the henchman hang two keys, one of which you need to progress further into the castle. A mace hangs on a nearby wall.

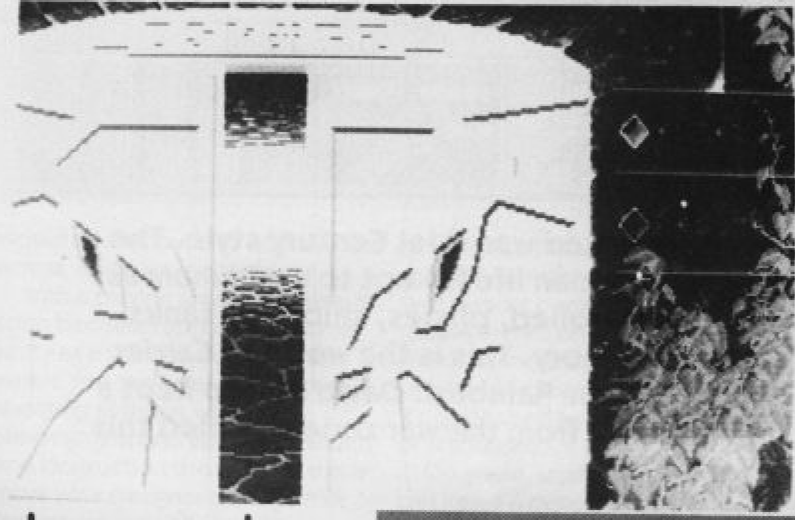
To get past the henchman, you must get the mace and stun him with it, leap over his crumpled body (you don't want to trip over him), and get the correct key. If you're about to pick the wrong key off the wall, the three prisoners will shake their heads, ignore their warning at your peril because a ten ton weight will come crashing down on your head.

Once you've got the right key, you must get back past the henchman before he regains conciousness and starts trying to whip you. Even then you still have to contend with rats, guards and vultures as you climb and jump your way to the exit at the top of the screen. And this is just one room!

The graphics are excellent yet still play second fiddle to the amazing sound effects. If at all possible, you should play this game wearing headphones or with your Amiga hooked up to your stereo, it's worth shelling out for the extra cables.

Once you get used to the rather unfriendly control system, *Dark Castle* will grab you by the throat and not let go. Compulsive viewing. . . and hearing!

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	10
VALUE	9
PLAYABILITY	8



INDIANA JONES AND THE TEMPLE OF DOOM

- MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMSTRAD CPC SERIES, SPECTRUM AND C64
- SUPPLIER: U.S. GOLD/ATARI GAMES
- PRICE: £19.99
- VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Deep in the heart of India lies the remote village of Mayapore, which was, for years, protected by the Sankara Stone. Then the stone was stolen. Devastation followed, and the village's children disappeared. Indy discovers them enslaved in the Pankot Palace, where they are being forced to dig in the Thuggee mines for precious stones.

As Indiana Jones, you must free the children and recover the Sankara Stone, before escaping across a precarious rope-bridge to freedom.

The game is split into three main levels with a 'bonus round' awarded if you are successful. Most of the action takes place beneath the Palace, in the Thuggee mines.

In level one, you must negotiate the various levels and caverns of the mine, fending off killer bats, snakes, and Thuggees with your whip, which also comes in handy for swinging across from one ledge to the next.

Different sections of the mine are joined by ladders which you can climb up or slide down. But you must be careful not to step too close to the edge of a ledge because you may lose your footing and fall.

Spread throughout the mine are caves, with bars across their entrances. Through the bars can be seen the village's children. To free the children, all you have to do is find each of the caves and crack your whip on the bars.

The graphic design of the mine is acceptable, but the bats, snakes and skulls could easily come from an 8 bit game, while the sound effects and music are primitive to say the least. What's more disturbing, though, is the lack of playability or attention to detail in this level, and throughout the rest of the game.

Such things as Indy walking above the ground, or in the rock wall, should have been seen during testing and removed. The way the bats fly towards you often makes them impossible to avoid, likewise the Thuggee's, especially when there are more than two chasing you at once. The animation of the Thuggees is poor considering the machine's graphic potential.

Having rescued all the children, Indy arrives at a tunnel entrance which is the start of level two. Here you must guide our hero, now in a mine car, down the tunnel on a series of tracks. Indiana Jones fans will remember this brilliant sequence from the film.

Apart from the hassle of the Thuggee guards, who still haven't given up chasing you, Indy must also content with giant bats, [illegible] missing track sections, and a giant Thuggee. By leaning one way or the other in the car, Indy can steer it past missing rails, and may still find time to whip the odd guard.

Here again, the game lacks that professional feel, happily much in evidence in *Road Runner*, U.S. Gold's last arcade conversion. As with level one, you could be forgiven for believing you were playing a Commodore 64 game rather than an ST game.

Shame, as the Spectrum and Amstrad versions were pretty good looking!

At the end of the tunnel lies The Temple Of Doom, and level three. Here Indy must find the lost Sankara stone, which has been hidden in front of Kali, the four armed goddess of death. Having retrieved the stone, it's back to the mine caverns and a repeat of level one.

Indy must recover three stones before escaping across the treacherous rope bridge.

Although this is a conversion from an arcade game, Paragon Software has done little more than produce an acceptable rather than a desirable piece of software.

When ST owners are asked to part with 20 hard earned pounds, they deserve something a little special. This one is decidely ordinary, give it a miss unless you are a Indiana Jones fan.

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
VALUE	4
PLAYABILITY	5

CARRIER

This is advanced war, 21st Century style. The danger to human life is kept to a minimum as remote controlled, planes, ships and tanks battle for victory. This is the world of *Carrier Command* from Rainbird. *David Bishop* kept a safe distance from the war zone and filed this report.

The time is the 21st Century. The place is an archipelago of 64 islands somewhere in the Pacific ocean. The mission is to overthrow the enemy forces that are, even as you read this, mounting numerous attacks on the few islands you still control.

Because of the danger to human life, warfare in the 21st Century has become a very much more refined and remote affair. One consequence is that almost all naval, aerial, and land based engagements now involve remote controlled planes and tanks. Long gone are the days when there were real people inside. That would be far too dangerous. Wars there still are, but at least they're safe wars!

This is the world of *Carrier Command*. A spectacular new game created by Realtime Software (of *Starstrike* I and II and *Starfox* fame), based on an idea by Clare "Arcade Action" Edgeley. CC is a mixture of arcade and strategy, neatly blended into a fast moving game of quick reflexes, both mental and physical.

Although the original concept was not their own, it was left to Realtime to take the initial outline and develop a fully fledged game from a collection of ideas.

Realtime's Ian Oliver recalls: "Firebird faxed the original spec to us at the end of February. At that time, the game existed on two and a half sides of A4. Since then, the design has developed in parallel with the programming. We've already got 27,000 lines of code which makes it one of, if not the largest 68000 game program to date."

At the start of the game, both sides have the same forces consisting of four jet fighters, amphibious tanks, and drones, and an aircraft carrier (ACC) fitted with the latest in laser turret technology.

All this deadly hardware tends to get into a myriad of tricky situations such as being blown out of the sky, or sunk without trace. Luckily you're sitting smug, well fairly smug anyway, in your central control room secreted deep in the heart of your ACC. Here you are immune from attack, unless of course your ACC is sunk, well I only said fairly smug!

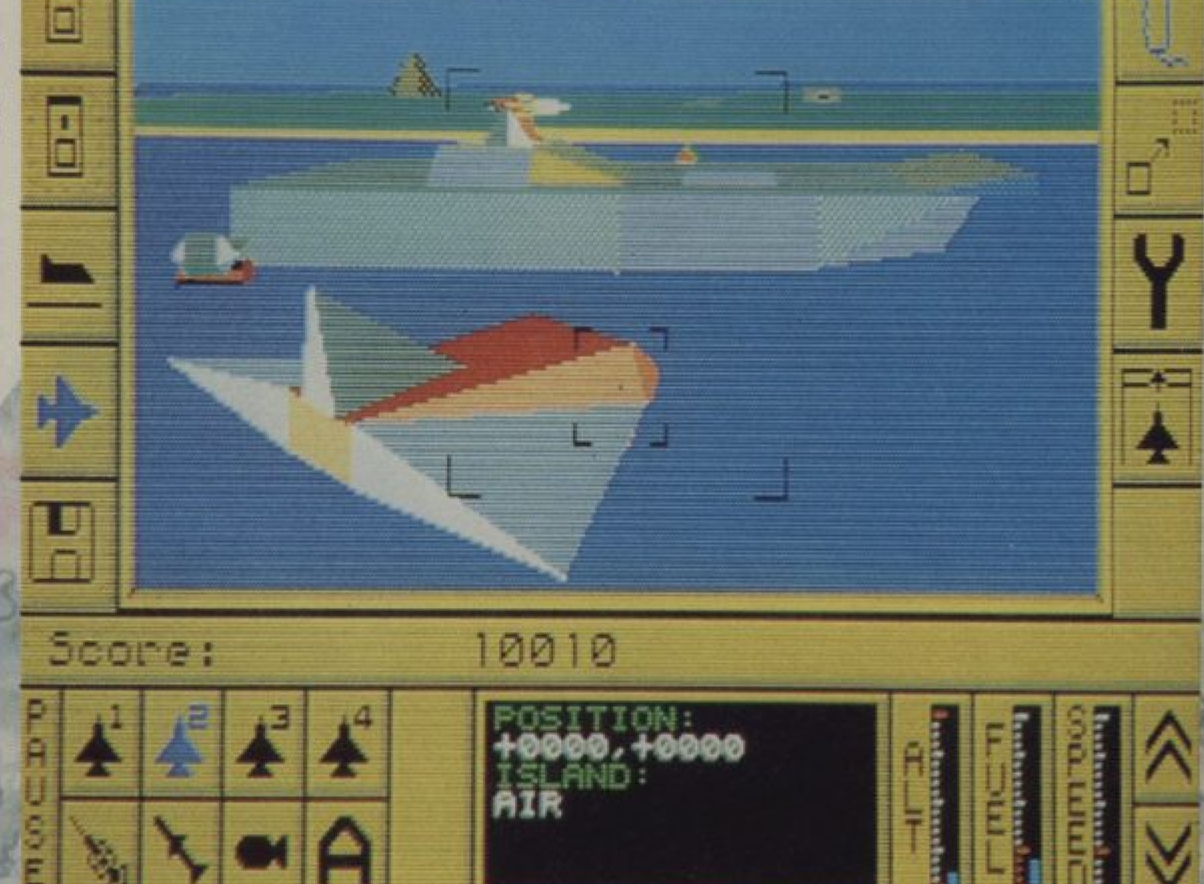
Your ACC is most vulnerable to attack by surface to surface missiles, launched either by the enemy's tanks, or by island based missile installations. Luckily, you start the game with four drones, whose only reason for existence, is to get destroyed by missiles that would otherwise have hit the ACC. To this end, you can manipulate your drones so that they are between you and the most likely direction from which an attack will occur. There are a number of preset drone configurations you can call up, or you can place each one individually around the ACC.

Each piece of your arsenal is fitted with an on-board camera, so you can call up a plane, for example, and fly it as if you were actually sitting in the cockpit. Once that plane is on course or in a holding manoeuvre, you can leave it and can call up another plane or tank elsewhere on the map.

Both planes and tanks start their life inside the ACC. Tanks exist out of the ACC's stern, while planes taxi from the ACC hanger onto the internal lift which brings them up onto deck, ready for take off. The view inside the hanger will show any unlaunched (or newly built) planes waiting patiently to be taken into battle

Due to the communications satellites in use, the effective remote control range of planes and tanks is a mere 15 kilometres radius from your ACC. Fly out of range and you'll start hearing static. Unless you turn back, you risk losing a plane for ever, which is severely uncool.

Although you can send each of your four planes off in different directions, there will be times when you want them all to go to



COMMAND

the same place at the same time. By entering formation mode, you can 'slave' one or more of your planes to a master, which you fly. Until released, the slave planes will emulate every move that the master plane makes, unless they get shot down, or run out of fuel.

Both planes, tanks, and the ACC can be armed with various different weapons for long and short range warfare. Tanks are fitted with a front mounted high power/low range chemical laser that needs recharging every 40 shots. Tanks can also be equipped with short range wire-guided missiles. They are also your only means of transporting both virus bombs, of which more later, and auto-control centre buildings, used to replace a destroyed control centre on an island.

Because your ACC is so vital to the cause, as well as being incredibly expensive, it is well protected with dual anti-missile systems. First there's ECM (Electronic Counter Measure), which sends up a cloud of metalic particles designed to confuse the radar guidance systems of any in-coming missile. Secondly, the ACC is equipped with anti-missile missiles that are automatically launched at any approaching danger.

The ACC also boasts a turret mounted, short range laser cannon of awesome power. This is used to take out aerial targets, stupid enough to fly too close. The laser cannon can also be used to pick off shore targets, but only when the ACC is close enough to an island to be a target itself, unless of course, you have already destroyed that island's missile launchers.

Planes can be equipped with either a low power/short range laser (used for strafing ground targets), or the facility to drop bombs on island targets, albeit with a limited payload capacity. Planes can also be fitted with medium range heat-seeking missiles, useful against other aircraft.

In addition a plane can carry a long range communication pod, which will allow it to fly beyond the normal range of 15 kilometres from the ACC, thus giving it more autonomy to engage the enemy further afield.

And when you look at the magnitude of the map, it's no wonder a long range pod had to be developed. The 64 islands are spread over a vast square 8x8 grid. Each of the 64 smaller squares in the grid is the equivalent to 200 kilometres across. The entire map would take about two hours to fly across, and a lot longer to sail.

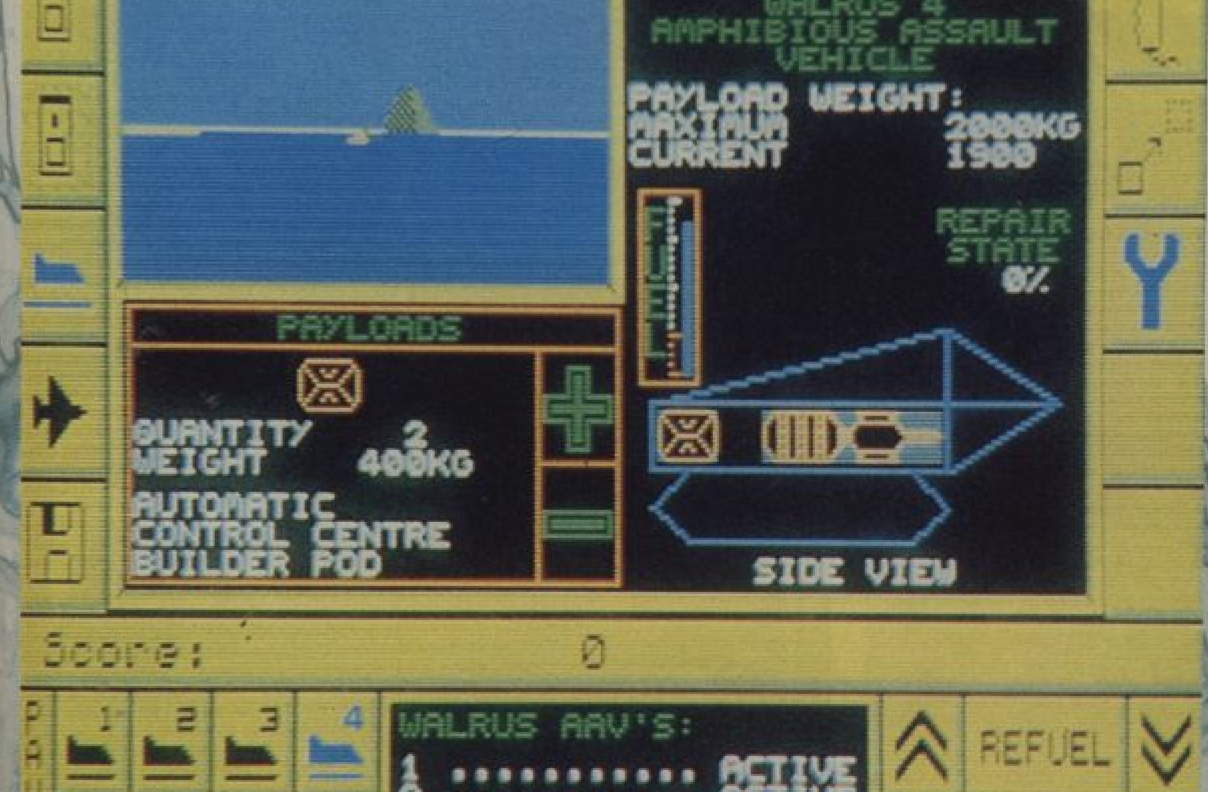
With a playing area of this size, it soon becomes apparent that this isn't just a straight arcade game where you zap over a titchy map shooting at things willy nilly – although this one approach! Death and destruction there is, but this is more your designer carnage that something out of Rambo VII.

Of the 64 islands, some are in the hands of the enemy (shown as red on the map), some are under your control (blue), but the majority start the game as neutral (green). Controlling an island has two distinct benefits. Firstly, it means there's one less in the hands of the enemy and therefore one less to capture, and secondly it can be used for the production of resources.

On green, unaligned islands, you can install a defence program, which will set about creating a Building Control Centre which co-ordinates the production of resource generating installations on the island. Such installations include oil wells, for the production of fuel resources, and mines, for the production of mineral resources for spare parts etc. Not all islands will be capable of producing all types of resources. Some, for example, will only be capable of supporting oil mines.

Unless you are either very quick or very lucky, taking an enemy island will involve the damage or destruction of some, if not all, of that island's installations. Until damaged or hitherto unbuilt (in the case of newly taken neutral islands) island installations are fully functional, no resources will be generated by the island, although it is now considered as 'one of yours' and is shown as blue on the map.

At the time of going to press *Carrier Command* was about 65 per cent complete. There is little doubt that it will set a new standard in 3D filled graphics, and help to establish Realtime Software as one of the leading exponents of this genre of game. The game is coming out first for the Atari ST (price £24.95), happily in colour and mono – don't miss it!



Alas Biff & Bones

" 'ello there Bones, 'ow's things then?"

" Still bashing away at the Old ST Biff, you playing. "

" You've been immersed in a world of fantasy and illusion then? "

" What? Oh Yeah, Yeah I 'ave. "

" I dunno, Bones, 'ow are you gonna choose which one to buy from all those U.S. Gold and GO! games? I mean, they all look so good! "

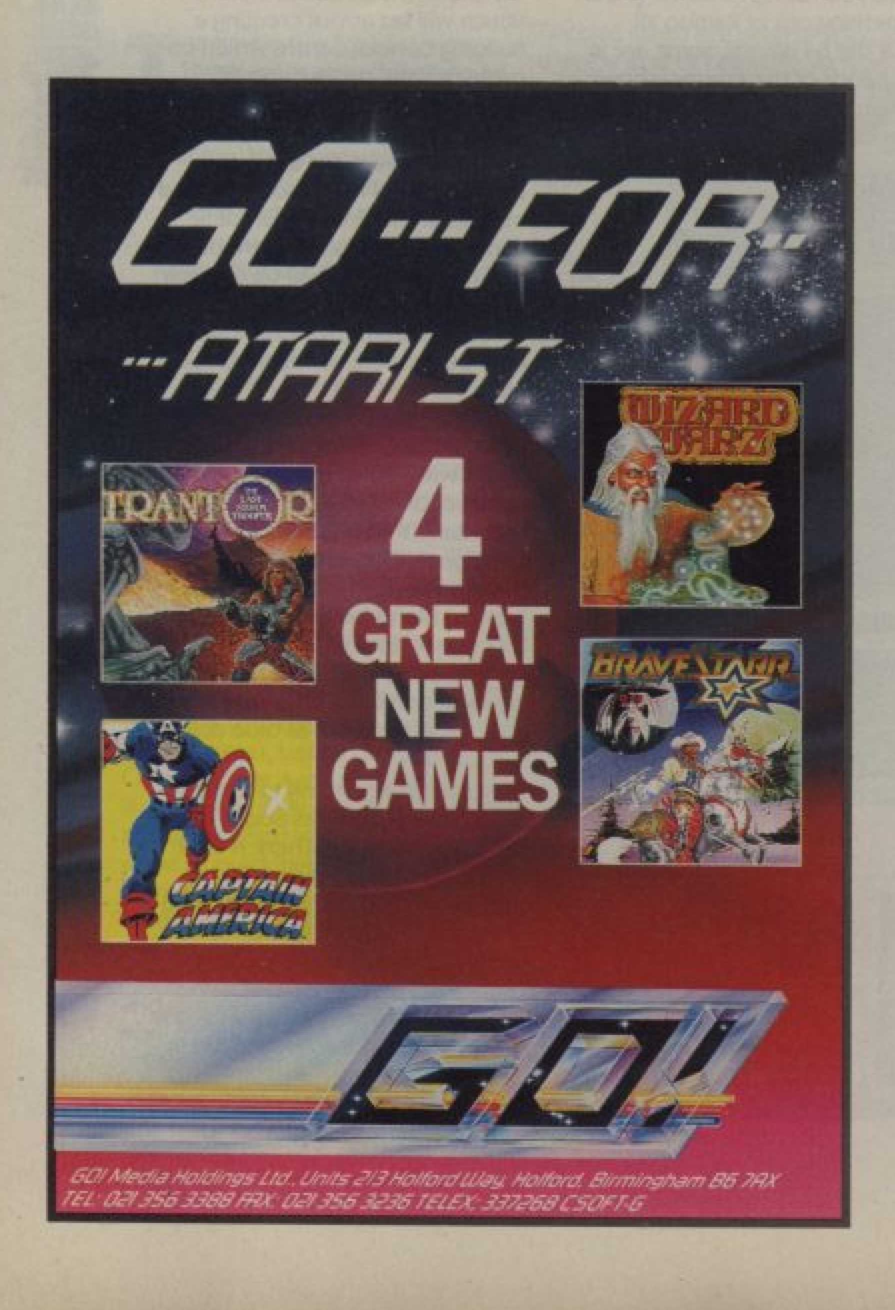
" Simple innit Biff, I'm just going to buy the lot. I put my foot down and told the wife it was necessary to be able to escape from everyday life and relax. I said it would make me a better person. "

" And she fell for that did she? "

" Well, not exactly, she's packed her bags and she's stopping at her mothers' "

" That must be very distressin' for you Bones. Wot are you gonna do? "

" Well I'm going to buy Out Run of course. It'll take my mind off it! "





ST*UNNING!*

WARLOCK

"The Final Conflict"

Warlock is a super, fast-action, arcade-style game in 3D. Set in a fabulous castle in a fantasy world, you play the part of the evil Doomlord, imprisoned by the forces of good. But, undaunted by the situation you find yourself in, you decide to go into battle against every do-gooder in the place. After all, it is they who have invaded your castle, 'Doomrock', and you have taken the precaution of setting changeling potions around here and there to enable you to change into a Goblin or a Troll when the enemy least expects it!

Find the Crystal of Power, do battle with damsels, dragons, knights and others in the Army of Light and find the White Wizard for a final confrontation!

Some of the most impressive graphics yet seen on a home computer, this 3D all-action arcade-style multi-role fantasy game is a must for every game addict.

"An excellent game to look at...graphics, sonics and gameplay are top class"—AMSTRAD ACTION.

"WARLOCK from The Edge should be absolutely fantastic...everything happens in castles and caves and dungeons and the whole thing looks completely great"—SINCLAIR USER.





Actual screenshots from Amstrad CPC version.

£14.99 *Atari ST*
(also on: AMSTRAD/C64/SPECTRUM!)

Warlock

The Doomlord as GOBLIN

The Doomlord as WARLOCK

The Doomlord as TROLL

THE EDGE

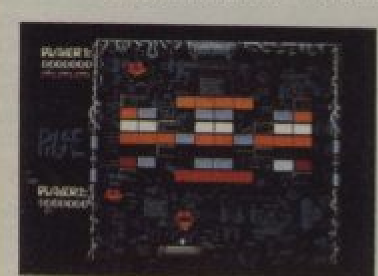
TONICTILE

The most stunning block-blasting game ever devised!

Have you got the lightning reflexes it takes to control your deflector and repulse the speeding missiles back at the colourful tiles in this all-action pulse-racing game? Blast a path past layer upon layer of tiles in this the most impressive version of a game of its kind.

Fabulous graphics and animation rarely matched on any home computer, and studio-sampled sound and music make this game an award winner both in its homeland of France, where it is a hot favourite for the top 'TILT D'OR' award, and everywhere else too! 33 levels of mindbending challenges, the first 16 of which you can access at will.

There's one player or two player options, and a fantastic CONSTRUCTION KIT allowing you to redesign the first 16 levels. And should you actually get to that highest 33rd level and face the Dragon Demon, then there's an amazing surprise in store for you!





Actual screenshots from Atari ST version

£19.99 *Atari ST*
(coming on: C64/AMIGA/IBM)

Tonic Tile

THE EDGE

LET THE GOOD TIMES SCROLL

The Amiga games scene has been developing at a furious rate in recent months. The Amiga is THE machine in terms of tech spec but to a large degree it had been ignored by UK software houses. But the recent price drop to £499 and the expanding UK and US markets mean more product is coming through. Tony Takoushi tells it as it is.

What has really been bugging me about the Amiga is the lack of quality arcade software. But this is improving and my aim is to have a peek at the arcade scene for Amiga owners.

There are nine main companies that supply Amiga arcade product in the UK at present, Electronic Arts/Activision/US Gold/Psygnosis/Mirrorsoft/Rainbird/Tynesoft and the joint efforts of Melbourne House and Mastertronic.

I am covering four main categories; shoot 'em up/arcade adventure/sport simulations and miscellaneous.

In the shoot 'em up catagory there is no shortage of smooth scrolling blasters, indeed that is the problem, there are too many. You are faced with the choice of *Goldrunner, Typhoon, Plutos, Xenon* and *Challenger*. All have superb graphics and good digitised sound and the aim is the same, kill the aliens and keep moving!

The pick of the bunch are *Plutos, Goldrunner* and (coming soon) *Xenon*. These are all what you would term in the state-of-the-art bracket, with the pick of the graphics and gameplay options.

There is another smooth scroll game in the *Defender*-style called *Space Ranger* but see Hot Gossip for an assessment.

The state of the art 3-D game for the Amiga at present is *Starglider* from Rainbird, and this is a goody for all Amiga owners. It has very fast 3-D action and a good measure of strategy to keep you thinking, *Starglider 2* is due in 1988 but this is using solids.

Tynesoft has a winner on their hands with *Mousetrap*. This is a stupidly simple platform game but the presentation and music are well up to the mark and had me leaping around ecstatically.

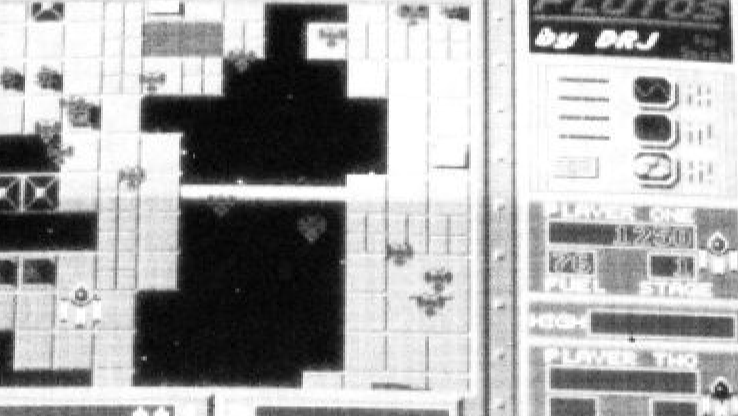
The real classic arcade adventure for the Amiga comes from Commodore itself, *Mindwalker* was one of the first (if not the) game to arrive and it was written by Bill Williams (creator of *Necromancer* and one of my software heroes).

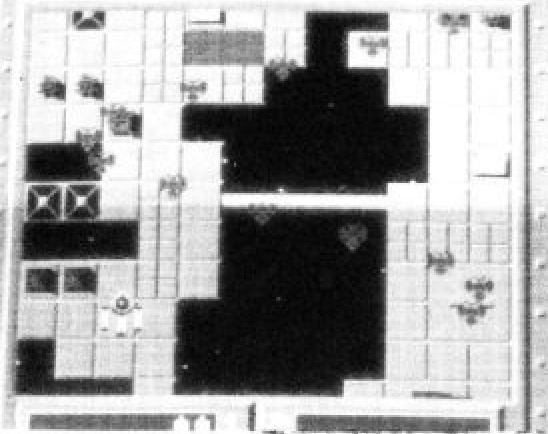
Faery Tale Adventure (Micro Illusions) is a playable little number with you travelling around building up your character. Presentation is excellent and all the controls are easily accessible through the mouse. This is more for the traditionalists among you. The latest offering from Micro Illusions is *Firepower*, a superb tank battle game. It has great digitised sound and is firmly in the arcade adventure mould but more of this next month.

The arcade adventure to draw gasps in amazement is *Defender of the Crown* (a Cinemaware product distributed by Mirrorsoft). This to my mind currently represents state-of-the-art in Amiga AA presentation. It is described as watching a film unfold and to all intent and purpose it is. You have to battle various regions of the UK to rescue the missus and build up your wealth and strength. Superb and a must for all you fans of the style. Mirrorsoft also has *Sinbad*, and SDI from Cinemaware.

There are not that many sport simulations around for the Amiga, you basically have to choose between Activision, Psygnosis and US Gold. Activision has four titles, *Championship Football, **Championship Golf**, Earl Weaver **Baseball*** and *Championship **Basketball***, while Psygnosis has *Arena* which is a decathlon clone.

The miscellaneous category has some real gems in it. The usual *Arkanoid* clone is there, *Impact* from Audiogenic is a real goody with some improvements on the arcade original (passwords are lev 11-gold/lev21-fish/lev31-wall/lev41-plus/lev51-head/lev61-fork/lev71-road). *Dr Fruit* is a good *Mr Do* clone but watch for the joystick movements in tight corners. *City Defence* is a brilliant version of *Missile Command* (if only they had jazzed up the cities a bit!!), *Marble Madness* is a lovely offbeat idea that plays well (shame about the constant disc loads) with you guiding a marble over various platforms to a goal.








SPORT SIMULATIONS

ARENA	PSYGNOSIS
LEADERBOARD	US GOLD
WORLD GAMES	US GOLD
WINTER GAMES	US GOLD
MEAN 18	US GOLD
10TH FRAME	US GOLD
CHMP BASKETBALL	ACTIVISION
CHAMPIONSHIP FOOTBALL	ACTIVISION
CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF	ACTIVISION
EW BASEBALL	ACTIVISION

MISCELLANEOUS

MARBLE MADNESS	ELECTRONIC ARTS
CITY DEFENCE	ANCO
CRUNCHER FACTOR	ANCO
DEMOLITION	ANCO
KARATE KID 2	MICRODEAL
NINJA MISSION	MASTERTRONIC
FEUD	MASTERTRONIC
AMIGA KARATE	EIDERSOFT
KARATE KING	KINGSOFT
IMPACT	AUDIOGENIC
DR FRUIT	GERMAN
AARGH!	MELBOURNE HOUSE
HOUSE	MELBOURNE HOUSE
ROCKFORD	MELBOURNE HOUSE
TEST DRIVE	ACCOLADE/US GOLD

SHOOT 'EM UPS

SPACE RANGER	MELBOURNE HOUSE
ROAD WARS	MELBOURNE HOUSE
XENON	MELBOURNE HOUSE
TYPHOON	GREMLIN
PLUTOS	TYNESOFT
GOLDRUNNER	MICRODEAL
CHALLENGER	ANCO
PHALANX	ANCO
SPACE BATTLE	ANCO
SWOOPER	ROBTEK
STARGLIDER	RAINBIRD
ARTICFOX	ELECTRONIC ARTS

ARCADE ADVENTURE

GARRISON	DIGITAL DREAMS
MOUSETRAP	TYNESOFT
MINDWALKER	COMMODORE
FAERY TALE ADVENTURE	MICRO
ILLUSIONS	MICRO
FIREPOWER	MICRO
DEFENDER OF THE CROWN	MIRRORSOFT
SDI	MIRRORSOFT
SINBAD	MIRRORSOFT
ARCHON II	ELECTRONIC ARTS
BARBARIAN	PSYGNOSIS
TERRORPODS	PSYGNOSIS
BRATTACAS	PSYGNOSIS

Garfield

"BIG, FAT, HAIRY DEAL"



SPECTRUM	AMSTRAD COMMODORE	AMIGA ATARI ST
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	DISC - £14.99	

SUNRISE OVER MELBOURNE

The buy-out of Melbourne House by budget specialists Mastertronic has put new life into the pioneering software house. A new range of games – with the emphasis on 16-bit – is about to hit the streets. Tony Takoushi investigates.

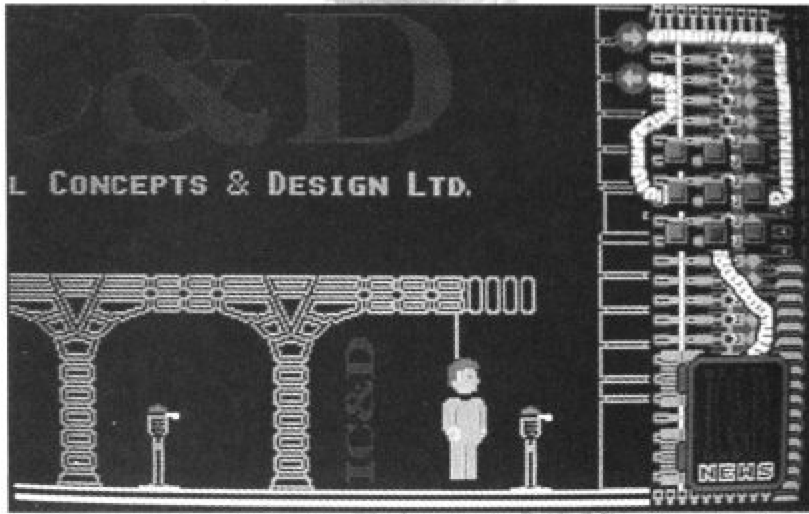
Earlier this year, when I heard Melbourne House was selling out it was with a twinge of sadness, because this company had helped pioneer some of the finest software to hit home micros in its time.

In fact there must be very few of you that were not touched by some of the classics, *Way of the Exploding Fist, Hobbit, Lord of the Rings* and *Penetrator*.

Well hold onto your hats, the company is back with a whole new direction and a lot of old aims!

Mastertronic bought the label and has now geared it up as a top end 16-bit company, this isn't to say there will not be any 8-bit games but the emphasis is on the new 16-bit machines.

I took a day out to visit them and have a little peek at the new software lined up for release in the coming months. They are catering for the Amiga, the ST and the IBM and four of the most popular 8-bit machines (C64, Spectrum, Amstrad and Atari).



Group Marketing Manager, Rachel Davies, laid out the aims of the new company by declaring that Melbourne House now aims to be a premier 16-bit label on the market with just a few conversions to 8-bit if the quality and theme can be accurately emulated. The company will also be striving for a balance of original and mainstream (arcade?!!) product, this in itself is pleasing as all too often companies lose sight of the fact that we all need a breath of fresh air every so often!

An interesting aspect to the company is the fact that it is taking games from its coin-op division and putting them on 8 and 16-bit machines. I say this with a little reservation because the logical question to ask is can a two megabyte game on a 8052 board with extra processing power strapped on, be converted to a little 'ol 8-bit micro?

I posed this question and the answer given was that all the essential qualities would be chosen from the game and these would make up the conversion, MH would rather go for eight close screens of the original game rather than produce 16 poor imitations. Well it seems to make sense.

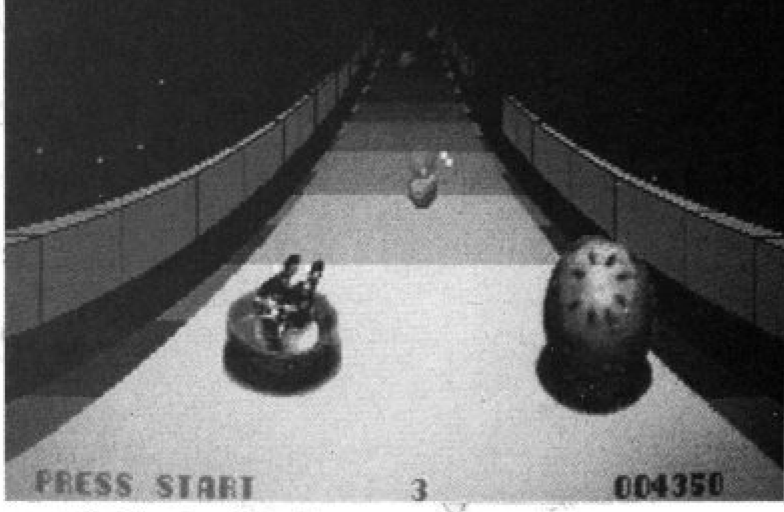
The first game to see light of day on the 16 and 8 bit machines is *Road Wars* a novel shoot 'em up written by members of the old (and brill!) Taskset team. It has been converted to the C64 and Spectrum. The aim of the game is travel along an enclosed road with energy barriers on either side of you while racking up points and collecting additional weapons. There is a two player option that makes for some sneaky moves if you feel inclined.

I was really surprised that the 8-bit conversions were excellent, very good presentation and incorporating most of the key elements from the arcade original. Clearly they are no match for the original but they do use the capabilities of the 8-bit machines well.

The Amiga 500 version (£19.95) is due for imminent release and the 8-bit versions (C64 £8.95, Spec £7.95) are well underway but as yet have no firm release date.

Rockford is a classic and MH is releasing it across all formats. I must admit that the ST and the Amiga versions were very poor. The Spectrum and C64 are good while the Amstrad is OK but will not set the world on fire.





An exclusive 8-bit game is *Pulse Warrior* (C64 and Speccy) it is a novel interpretation of the *Arkanoid* theme. You have to bat sparks around the screen and avoid and destroy obstacles along the way.

Street Hassle is a fun offering with your character head-butting, kicking and assaulting everything in sight (grannies and all), it plays well and is fun. Again it is available on the C64 and Spectrum.

Xenon is a smooth scrolling shoot 'em-up on the ST and Amiga. I love this one – it is really playable and has superb graphics. There is always room for state-of-the-art games and right now this is the best scrolling shoot 'em-up on the market bar none. The Amiga version is being vamped up to use the extra power of the machine (are you listening software houses!). In fact MH insisted on it and just reinforces their attitude to quality software.

The last game I looked at was *Metropolis*. This is an IBM game and really out of my experience as the number of games seen on the IBM can be counted on my right hand. It was very well presented and uses speech liberally, the game being in the arcade adventure mould.

It will be released across all formats except the Atari 8-bit.

Melbourne House was started up in 1977 by an Australian husband and wife team. There have been around 300 software titles released to date with 200 book titles ranging from technical manuals to starter guides to home programming.

The most successful titles to emerge from the company were: *The Hobbit, Lord of the Rings, Way of the Exploding Fist, Melbourne Draw, Mugsy* and *Penetrator*. Many of the above titles set the standard in their field at the time of release and even today their pedigree can be appreciated.

The company was sold to Mastertronic in early 1987 and has been bought upto date with Mastertronic using it as its premier 16-bit label.

To all intents and purposes Melbourne House is now a company of the future, with its sights set firmly on the 16-bit.

SEGA COMMODORE SPECTRUM

WOOLWORTHS ▶TOP 30◀ COMPUTER SOFTWARE

DECEMBER 1987

POSITION	TITLE	SOFTWARE HOUSE	MACHINE TYPE	PRICE
1.	Combat School	Ocean	Spectrum	7.95
2.	Thundercats	Elite	Spectrum	7.95
3.	California Games	U.S. Golc	C64	9.99
4.	6 Pack II	Elite	Spectrum	9.95
5.	World Class Leaderboard	U.S. Gold	Spectrum	8.99
6.	Indiana Jones	U.S. Gold	Spectrum	8.99
7.	Renegade	Imagine	Spectrum	7.95
8.	World Class Leaderboard	U.S. Gold	C64	9.99
9.	6 Pack II	Elite	C64	9.95
10.	Indiana Jones	U.S. Gold	C64	9.99
11.	Gunship	Microprose	Spectrum	9.95
12.	Renegade	Imagine	C64	8.95
13.	Nebulus	Hewson	Spectrum	7.95
14.	Star Wars	Domark	Spectrum	9.95
15.	Thundercats	Elite	C64	9.95
16.	Match Day II	Ocean	Spectrum	7.95
17.	Star Wars	Domark	C64	9.95
18.	Airbourne Ranger	Mircoprose	C64	14.95
19.	Computer Hits 4	Beaujolly	Spectrum	9.95
20.	Thundercats	Elite	Amstrad	8.95
21.	Live Ammo	Ocean	Spectrum	9.95
22.	Action Force	Virgin	Spectrum	9.95
23.	720'	U.S. Gold	Spectrum	9.99
24.	Bubble Bobble	Firebird	Spectrum	7.95
25.	Buggy Boy	Elite	C64	9.95
26.	Computer Hits 4	Beaujolly	C64	9.95
27.	Zig Zag	Mirrorsoft	C64	9.95
28.	Bubble Bobble	Firebird	C64	8.95
29.	Ace II	Cascade	Spectrum	8.95
30.	Action Force	Virgin	C64	9.95

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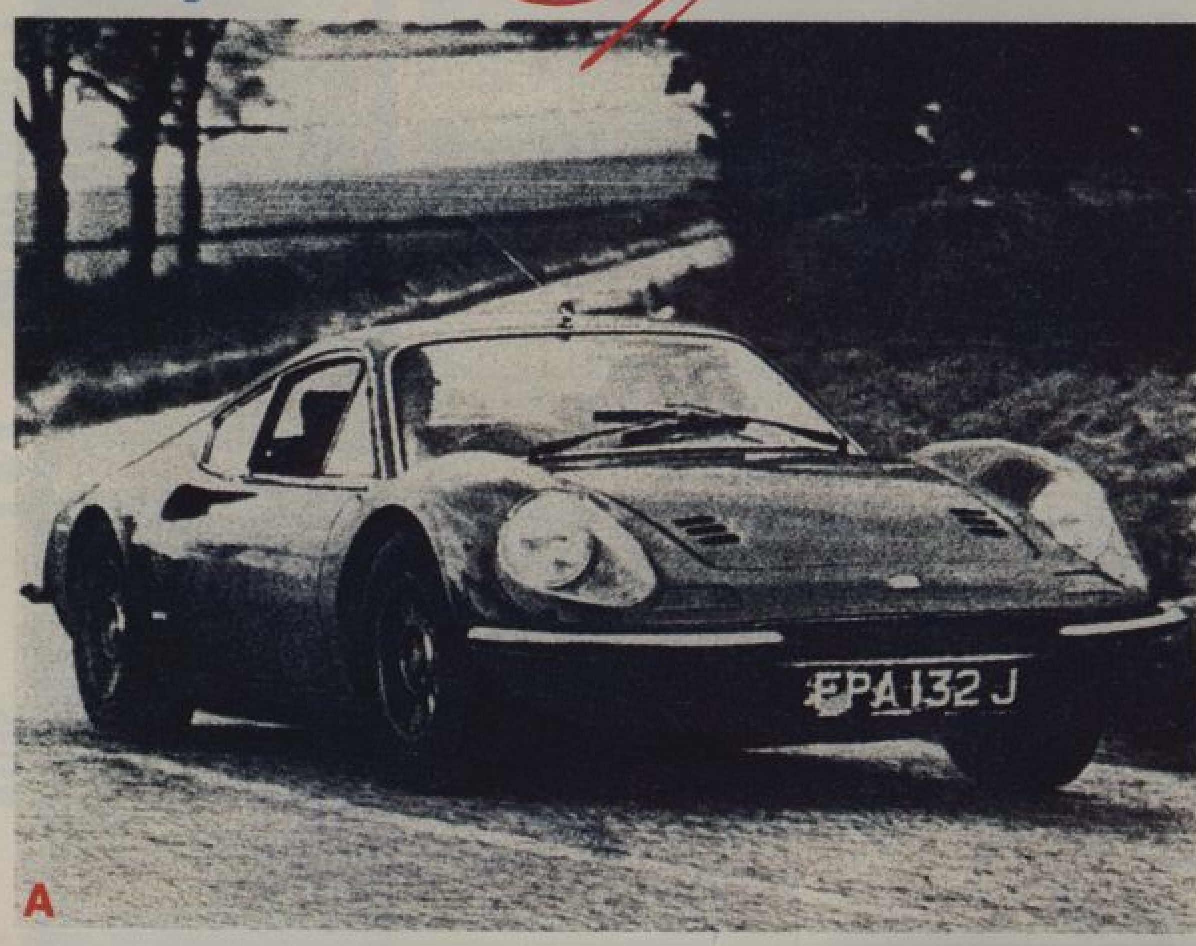
* At selected larger stores.
* Items subject to availability

COMMODORE SPECTRUM SEGA

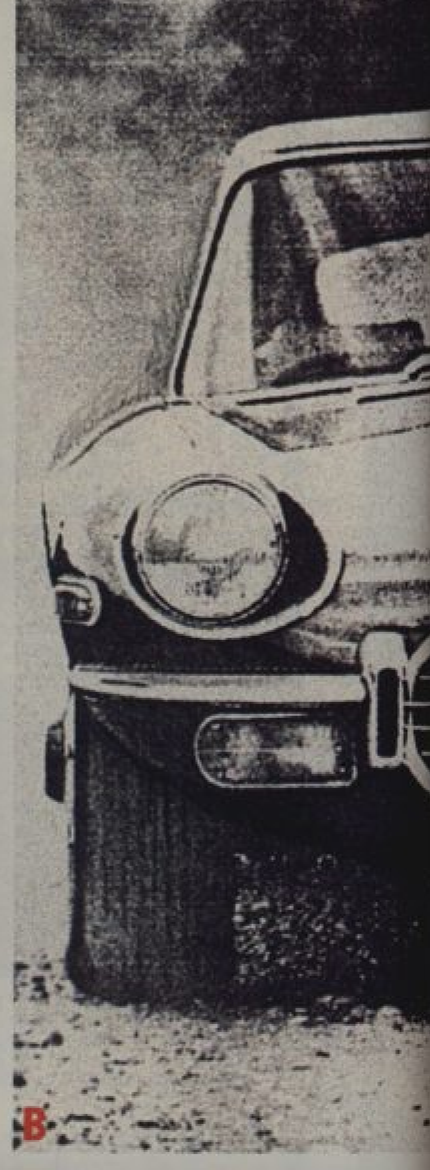
TOTALLY



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A



B

And thanks to US Gold we're GIVING AWAY a genuine stand up OutRun machine! Yup, a genuine Sega arcade machine – just like the one in your local arcade – could be all yours!

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C

OUTRUN COMPETITION



to *Computer and Video Games*, OutRun Competition, US Gold Ltd, Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. The competition will be judged by US Gold and C+VG, closing date for entries is January 16th.

C+VG GOLD OUTRUN COMPETITION

NAME ____________________

ADDRESS ____________________

____

AGE ____________________

Computer owned: C64 □ Spectrum □ Amstrad □ (tick box)

Car A is: ____________________

Car B is: ____________________

Car C is: ____________________

Car D is: ____________________

Car E is: ____________________



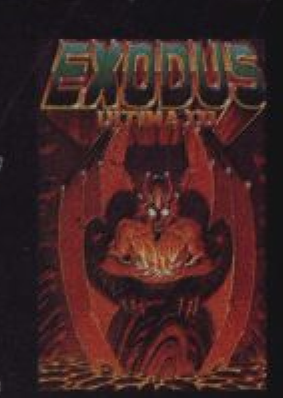



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Ultima V

Warriors of Destiny

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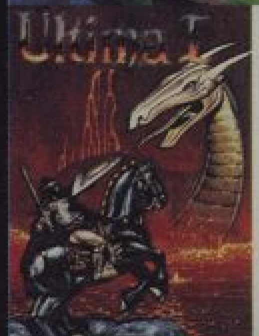
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ADVENTURE ZONE

news

Welcome to the Adventure Zone! Anything can happen within the next few pages – and probably will as Keith Cambell, C+VG's master of the mystic arts, brings your news, reviews and helpful hints from the wacky world of adventuring. So please don't adjust your magazine – reality will be resumed as soon as possible . . .

Level 9's Knight Orc is now available for the IBM PC and compatibles and The Guild of Thieves from Magnetic Scrolls is out on the Amstrad 6128. Both adventures are released by Rainbird and will cost £19.95.

Readers who have been around long enough, may remember the seventh issue of C+VG, dated May 1982, which called our first review of a ZX81 adventure. It was called Abersoft Adventure, and was classed, even in those days, as YET ANOTHER version of the original Colossal Cave adventure. Abersoft, although I didn't know it at the time, comprised one John Jones-Steele.

John went on to program the very successful Mordon's Quest, published by Melbourne House, before joining Level 9 as a programmer. His name is written onto the credits of Knight Orc and Gnome Ranger.

John has now departed from Level 9, and hopes soon to be producing new Abersoft adventures for one of Britain's leading software publishers. This makes the long-awaited sequel to Mordon more likely, and he and Peter Morland, Mordon's co-author, are working on the idea of producing a 16-bit version of the game, enhanced by some fifty locations, accessed by that infuriatingly locked south door on the landing!

Watch for further developments next month!

There is no doubt about the popularity of the Atari ST amongst adventure players. Henry Mueller, who runs the Adventurer's Club Ltd., reports that out of 100 members joining in the past few weeks, no less than 83 were ST owners.

"I knew the ST was popular, but I was absolutely staggered at this figure," says an amazed Henry.

Ingrid Bottomley, the famous Gnome of Gnome Ranger, plans to make a comeback in the spring, in Gnome Ranger II, Pete Austin has confirmed that she has chosen to be published by Level 9.

Time and Magik, Lord Of Time, Red Moon and Price Of Magik trilogy, ready for release some time ago as far as Level 9 were concerned, has been delayed by Rainbird, and is currently the only Level 9 title definitely scheduled for publication by Rainbird.

Meanwhile, Pete is researching Arthurian legend. . .

Looking back a few years, and playing the adventures of today, you would say that adventures have come a long way – well, wouldn't you?

Not so, argues Simon Davidson of Sheffield. "They are still as rigid and repetitive as the first 'cave' adventure, mainly because the core of the modern game works in exactly the same way." By repetition, Simon means that if you enter the same command twice, you get the same response twice. "Each action occurs in the 'now' time frame, with no reference to past events."

Simon accepts that nowadays games are often much bigger, with interactive characters, randomly moving objects, and multiword input ("totally superfluous," he claims). "But behind that you've got the same system operating."

Simon thinks that I'm too easily satisfied with an Infocom game, and too willing to get carried away and say an adventure is the 'best ever', suggesting that I might be on the payroll of Magnetic Scrolls. "It seems you are in their 'Hype & Publicity' department. That interview in April 86 was just two pages of ego boost for Ms Sinclair, whose obvious aims in life are to show that a mere woman can beat men in a man's world."

Phew! After a controversial letter like that, what could I do, but award Simon this month's free subscription to the Adventurer's Club Ltd?

If you are looking for a specialist adventure club to join, C+VG recommend ACL. Adventurers worldwide are supported, and the UK subscription rate is £11.95 per annum. Application forms are available from ACL at 64c Menelik Road, London NW2 3RH, or from C+VG (address letters to Adventure Helpline.)

It's surprising how many letters still keep rolling in from adventure players who have been reading C+VG, and the adventure column, since issue No.1, back in October 1981. But you don't have to be that long in the tooth to be welcomed in these pages!

Whether you have been with us for six years, or six minutes, most of us here, that's Paul Coppins, Matthew Woodley, Steve Donoghue, and yours truly, wish you a very Merry Christmas, and an Adventuresome New Year. The Fiend wishes you a BAH! and DOUBLE BAH! respectively.

Season's Greetings, too, to the writers of adventures everywhere, and to adventure publishers, whether big or small, successful or struggling. Thank you for providing the raw material to tear apart, the inspiration to entertain and amuse through these pages (*Did you? – Ed*) and above all, the free review copies! May there be many more!

1988 promises to be another great year for adventure, with more and more mega adventures for 16-bit machines, and no slowing of the flow of cassette games for the older established machines. So save some of that Christmas money for the New Year's crop of goodies.

We at C+VG plan to bring you the very best in Adventure coverage, with up-to-the-minute reviews, features, competitions, and a second to none reader service through the famous Adventure Helpline. And to show we mean business, we're getting off to an early start, with an Adventure Supplement, in the March issue – don't miss it!!

Happy Christmas everyone!

KEITH CAMPBELL

There's never enough pages to get all the reviews in one issue, so here is a look at the 'adventures pending' shelves in the Penthouse. Reviews of some of these titles follow next month.

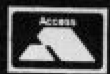
Village of Lost Souls. This BBC adventure, originally reviewed by Jim Douglas in December 1985, has been substantially enhanced, and is now released by Robico. Available for BBC, Electron, Amstrad and Atari XL/XE.

A clutch of *Double Gold* adventures has been released by Incentive Software. As well as Zodiac and *The Secret Of Life*, for the C64, reviewed here, come *The Alien* and *Dragon's Tooth* for BBC B, and *Nova* plus *Haunted House* for Spectrum.

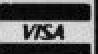
Following *Dungeon, Amethyst, Alchemist, Plasma Touch* has produced another irreverent adventure for the Amstrad, to be released by Atlantis.

Meanwhile the Christmas rush continues. Other games I've received but haven't been able to review yet are Countdown to Doom by Topologika on the Amstrad; The Bard's Tale by Electronic Arts on the Atari ST; Defender of the Crown on the Commodore 64 and Rainbird's the Pawn (text only) on the Spectrum Plus 3.

If you are stuck for an ideal Christmas present/or an adventurer this year, check out Axe by Frank Oliver. It's a worthwhile read.



BYRITE SOFTWARE



SPECTRUM NEW TITLES

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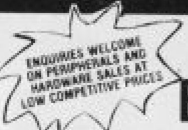


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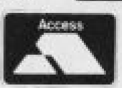
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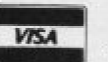
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Access

ADVENTURE reviews

JACK THE RIPP

▶ SUPPLIER: CRL/ST. BRIDES
▶ MACHINES: SPECTRUM/64/ AMSTRAD
▶ PRICE: £8.95 (spec) £9.95 (C64/Ams) £14.95 (all discs)
▶ REVIEWER: KEITH

No swirling mists added a cloak of mystery and suspense as I wandered down the Victorian lanes in the Whitechapel area of London.

It was a clear night, and I saw the strange shape lying by the wall only too clearly. I examined it, and slowly, in gory detail, the immensity of my find was revealed to me – a woman's body, slit from ear to ear.

As I recoiled in horror, my hand, groping for support, slid into the body's entrails, as it entered a gash that exposed all the vital organs of the stomach.

Strong stuff, including the digitised pictures which are displayed following key events in the game. *Jack The Ripper* has an 18 certificate from the British Board of Film Censors, the first adults only horror game to be released, claim CRL.

Is the official rating a gimmick? CRL claim that they would lay themselves open to prosecution under the Obscene Publications Act, had they not voluntarily submitted the game for appraisal.

This is probably true – in fact, some parts were altered as a result. And there is no doubt that some of the text descriptions are quite disturbing, and certainly not suitable for children – I joke not.

Here is a very remarkable adventure in more ways than one. First, it is a most unlikely creation from two ladies whose reputation is more in the realm of humour. To look at them, you wouldn't think butter would melt in their mouths!

On the other hand, the Victorian setting of St.





PRIDE OF THE FEDERATION

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▶ PRICE: £6.95
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▶ REVIEWER: KEITH

The galaxy has outlawed the growing of poppies except on designated space farms, to overcome the problem with opiate drugs.

But alien bandits plan to raid one of the farms, so John Pride – that's you – Pride Of The Federation and your mate Jacko, have been planted on one of the farms, to thwart any attempt at a hijack.

You wake up after a drinking bout with Jacko, and find that while you were sleeping it off, an alien force has taken over the station. . .

This is a three part adventure, with a plot that offers a lot of scope. My expectations were raised by the quality and presentation of review notes, and I particularly noted the advice to examine all objects, both moveable and immovable.

I have rarely been so disappointed, especially in view of the potential of the plot. It all started when I tried to read a notice over a door; "I can't do that" was the reply. So I tried "Examine notice".

By the time I had examined the door, the spiders near it, and the droid past it, and got the same reply, I began to get frustrated.

This increased as more and more notices appeared throughout the first dozen or so locations. The only time I got a different reply to EXAMINE was for "Examine south door". That time I moved south! 'Nuff said!

▶ PERSONAL 5
▶ VALUE 5

ZODIAC TH OF LIFE

▶ SUPPLIER: INCENTIVE SOFTWARE
▶ MACHINES: C64
▶ PRICE: £7.95
▶ REVIEWER: KEITH

A couple of drab adventures make up one of the latest series of releases in the *Double Gold* series from Incentive.

Zodiac is an adventure where many of the puzzles pass by unnoticed, if the player happens to be carrying the right object at the right time.

The DELETE key seems to have been replaced by the

PER

Brides' School, did perhaps help with the atmosphere.

Secondly, this is the first commercially available adventure written using Gilsoft's *Professional Adventure Writer* – the successor of the *Quill*. It's capabilities are most impressive, as you will see in a moment – to sum up, you could say that here is *Sherlock* without bugs.

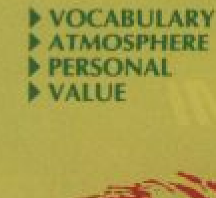
The comparison with *Sherlock* is inevitable. *Ripper* is set in London in about the same period. Couple that with real-time playing so that other developments are happening "behind the scenes" as time ticks by, and you will begin to get the picture.

Multiple word input is accepted, and indeed, necessary from time to time, so as to be able to distinguish, for example, between the fine carved table, and the occasional table – the crumpled paper, and the small piece of paper.

The plot is somewhat linear, with side branches at frequent intervals leading to the player's arrest for the murder (end of game) – but the puzzles to enable the dead-end branches to be bypassed are quite clever, and give satisfaction in solving. The further one gets into each of the three parts, so the ram save STORE command becomes more and more useful, producing a highly playable adventure in place of what would, prior to ram save, have been completely unacceptable.

Altogether I found *Jack The Ripper* pleasantly unpleasant to play. This is certainly St. Brides' best to date. The text descriptions flow long and atmospheric. It is amazing to think of the amount of development effort by programmers that went into the bug-ridden *Sherlock*, also a Spectrum game, compared with the superior results achieved here in a shorter time by non-programmers using what is a commercially available adventure creator utility.

▸ VOCABULARY 8
▸ ATMOSPHERE 10
▸ PERSONAL 9
▸ VALUE 9





THE SECRET

cursor key, making correction of typing errors a chore.

Collecting the signs of the Zodiac and delivering them to an evil wizard to avoid destruction of your tribe makes up the unlikely plot.

On the same cassette, *Secret Of Life* is a three-parter, almost unplayable due to a disastrous combination of background and foreground colours at some of the locations. No amount of fiddling with the TV controls renders text in these locations readable.

Both adventures have drab graphics, in a repetitive and overlarge border. Ugh!

▸ PERSONAL 3
▸ VALUE 3

THE CROWN OF RAMHOTEP/ THE PROSPECTOR

▸ SUPPLIER: TARTAN SOFTWARE
▸ MACHINE: SPECTRUM
▸ PRICE: £2.95
▸ REVIEWER: KEITH
● Mail Order only from: Tartan Software, 61 Bailie Norrie Crescent, Montrose, Angus DD10 9DT

Two games on one tape can't be bad value at £2.95, although it does depend on what sort of game you're looking for. Both of these come in the same format – *Quilled* with graphics, fairly sparse text, but competently put together and neatly presented.

In *Crown Of Ramhotep*, your friend Bill has been exploring a pyramid, seen the fabulous crown, but been unable to bring it out.

In mounting a new expedition to get it, he seeks your help.

You start in a hotel room in a village on the Nile, penniless, but with your own car. There's things to do there before moving on to join the expedition.

As *The Prospector*, you arrive at a one-horse Californian town in the gold rush, and must find or buy the equipment to go prospecting for a mine. I didn't like the way my $10 oil lamp failed to light – perhaps it contained no oil, but how would I know? I tried examining it and learned nothing.

Both games have a ram save feature, and fairly comprehensive instructions and hints load before the main program in each case. Problems there are too, but unfortunately they weren't sufficiently intriguing to arouse more than my casual interest.

▸ PERSONAL 5
▸ VALUE 8

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ADVENTURE

How desperate can you get? **John Grimond** of *Toowoomba*, Queensland, got so strung up about the meaning of the Russian SVETOFOR in *Fourth Protocol*, that he rang the Russian Consulate in Sydney. "From what I could gather from my Comrade in the Consulate, SVETOFOR means SHINING LIGHT, or maybe AURORA." says John. Did he mention traffic, John?

Adventures do have the reputation of getting people into a state, and this month sees an extra lot of highly strung adventurers – strung up from the ceiling in a net, in *Rigel's Revenge!* Who can land this prize catch safely?

Further Rigellian problems come from **Bob Dougherty** of Lancaster. "How does the stun-gun work, and how can you open the utility cupboard in the Dominator Tank?" asks Bob.

Neil Ashmore reveals how to get the gold watch from the rabbit, in *Custerd's Quest*, in response to **Peter Wall's** earlier plea (see clues section). But this brings him to his own problem – the evil green door, outside which he is stuck! Try throwing the bomb at it, Neil. Not got it yet? Then give some treasure to the dragon!

"I'm desperately trying to succeed in *Uninvited* on the Amiga," says **Miah Amor** of Warrnambool, in Australia. Miah is having difficulty getting outside, opening the light in the bathroom and doors in the hallway. Unfortunately, my own problems with *Uninvited* were even greater – the review disk completely failed to load – if yours did, and you know the answer, please help!

There are collectors of all sorts of unusual things, and there's no reason why adventure memorabilia wouldn't be among them. So here's a plea with a difference. Infocom enthusiast **Kostas Pollizos** of Athens, is desperately looking for the original packaging for *Starcross* and *Suspended*. Nowadays, of course, all Infocom games come in a standard square box – but in days of yore, the shape and size of the package was one of those surprises that delighted adventurers when they bought one of the games. If anyone has these packaging (games not required) and would like to sell or otherwise dispose of them, write to Kostas at El. Benizelou 17, Zografou 15772, Athens, Greece.

Now here's some news for **Graham Neilson**, who has been trying to get into *Grigor's Lair* in Souls of Darkon. You can't! According to **Bill Moore** of Market Drayton, that is. Bill has been trying for six months and failed, so there'd better not be an answer, he says! Stand outside the den, and try moving N, N, (need map) E (use belt), and E, he suggests. Meanwhile, Bill has managed to turn Kraytor into a glass statue, but it doesn't seem to bother him in the least. "He invariable kills me a few turns later!" says Bill. "Is this a bug?"

"Please sing the praises of Rod Pike for me in your column!" writes **Hugh Fletcher**. "This is one of the best games I have played which has atmosphere and feeling – a rare commodity these days." Done, Hugh – and watch out for the next game from Rod – Wolf Man, due 'ere soon.

If I said *Spytrek syndrome* would you know what I mean? **David Picking**, of Upminster coined the phrase, and I knew exactly what he meant – it goes into adventure lore along with such other gems as Scott Adams' kitchen cabinet!

David uses Spytrek syndrome to describe his problem in C-64 *Winter Wonderland*. When he was stuck for some cash, I suggested he SELL the egg to the professor, rather than just give it away. He was sure SELL was a verb he would have thought of originally, but he gave it a try, and it didn't work. According to

helpline

Incentive's official solution, it should.

In sending whole pages of tips in reply to readers' problems, **Hugh Walker** finds difficulty with *Castle Blackstar*. "It is a very complex game, and it is almost impossible to answer non-specific questions without setting out a full solution!" For example, to kill the dragon without blocking the opposite exit, says Hugh, you must have the knife and the vial, and enter the room from the Warm Room, to the west.

Sin Chong Lau, having done all sorts of immoral things, all to no avail, to Thorblast, in *Leather Goddesses of Phobos*, has come up with the 'ultimate solution' for Steve Meretsky. "He should be nailed to a scratch 'n' sniff card, and have a pair of 3D glasses stuck up his !!!!!."

Clues this month come from: **Pauline Garnett**, Andover; **Neil Ashmore**, Stockport; **Jonathan Marshall**, Ealing; **V Barker**, Stockton; **Mike Thomas**, Caerphilly and many from **Hugh Walker**, Guildford.

ADVENTURE clues

CUSTERD'S QUEST
To get the watch, take liquid, cake, and Turkish Delight to the rabbit hole. Drink the liquid, and take the Delight. Type IN, and find the rabbit. When the rabbit has eaten the delight it will die, leaving you with the watch. Go back and eat the cake to return to normal size.

ZZZZ:
Try to enter the mansion, but then change your mind, and do a bit of climbing!

THE BIG SLEAZE:
Put battery in plane at the top of a high rise building.

TEMPLE OF TERROR:
Throw the scorpion at the torturer's door before entering. The scorpion can be found by searching the fiend's room (no, not him again!) after throwing the tapestry at him.

LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS:
Choose the coded wife in the harem, and ask her to kiss your left kneecap!

VERY BIG CAVE:
The utility belt is full of anagrams. Decipher the object and dial it. Try PARAQUAT and BICARBONATE.

Examine and get the rabbit, to trigger the next stage. Go to the Gotham City picture gallery before the jester, and examine the bubbles. Gas the jester with the canister.

MATT LUCAS:
To find your way to Harpinger, keep retracing steps to gradually build up a map.

SERF'S TALE:
To start, go north twice, then keep SE until you find the body. Read the map, but do not keep it in your pocket.

HEROES OF KARN:
The crowbar is in the toolroom, south of the crypt.

FRANKENSTEIN:
Go north from the frozen body, aim gun at body, fire it, and return to find the ice axe.

CASTLE BLACKSTAR:
Boat will protect you against flames, unless dynamite isn't protected.

ASSASSIN (RICK HANSON):
Get the skis, and use the butcher's hook and rope to climb the cliff.

ADVENTURE

The Fiend....

And it came to pass that the Fiend descended from the Folly to move among us ordinary mortals and go in search of adventure. Or rather adventure games. Was he pleased with the state of play? Read on to find out in the latest missive from Folly.

I stood atop the Folly the other day, looking down upon my domain and amusing myself by observing the scurryings and bustlings of you mortals, when an idle question popped into my craggy cranium: just how many adventure games have I bought for old faithful in recent times? And more to the point, perhaps, just how many new adventure games have been available?

Us Fiends are nothing if not dynamic, and leaping forth upon the very instant I set out to investigate.

The day was beautiful, with dark glowering clouds pouring forth and reducing the daylight to a mere glimmer, so I felt confident enough to slink abroad before the hour of sunset, for once. I honoured the nearest large town with my presence, and sought out both Boots and Smiths in order to count the number of adventure games upon their shelves.

Methought this would be a fair indicator, as the twain dominate the High Street in software terms. And to be really magnanimous, I would condescend to count the Commie 64 games as well, despite the fact that these are usually way beneath my notice.

The results of this Fiendish survey are as follows: Adventure games for the Spectrum in Boots, zero; for the 64, zero. Adventure games for the Spectrum in Smiths, zero; for the 64, zero.

It does not take a mind as powerful as mine to figure out that the sum total of games for both machines in the giants of the High Street retailing was zero. And before anybody shouts "foul", the Fiend would point out that he counted them all twice, and promptly took himself off to another large town to repeat the survey, in case the first was subject to some statistical fluke. And the results were identical! No adventure game here, either.



Where was *Rigel's Revenge*? Where were *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*? Where was *The Pawn, Guild of Thieves, Stationfall,* and *Lurking Horror*? Where was *Knight Orc, Silicon Dreams,* and *Jewels Of Darkness?*

Oh it's all right for all you swanking about with your 16-bit machines, you have the world of adventure at your feet. But what about us 8 bit owners?

The Fiend would offer the following questions for your consideration, my faithful followers, but mind you don't break something inside your feeble brains. Is the fact that the software houses can charge more than £20 per game for the new machines seducing them away from the older machines, where £9.95 is considered expensive? Or is it lack of new software that is causing the upsurgence of the cottage industry GAC games that seem to be proliferating?

Whatever answer you decide upon, I will tell you this. If a mega-game came along tomorrow, then the buyers of the said High Street stores would insist that it was packaged in a double-sized cassette box. It was very apparent that both operate a full-price-big-box, budget-game-small-box policy. I mean those big boxes really make the games look worth £10, don't they? BAH!

This makes the Fiend very angry, for he loathes and hates big boxes. They are a total waste of space. It's not so bad for me, for I can always find another cave to store things in, but the average house soon fills up, to no purpose. This may come as a shock to the said buyers, but these boxes take up TWICE the storage space of the little ones, and are very inconvenient. But I suppose that yet again I am a lone angry voice screaming in the wilderness. You lot probably like large boxes. It's probably the pretty colours that attract you. Double BAH!

So I conclude this month's scroll by thumbing my large hairy nose in the general direction of the stores' buyers, and to all you who think that big boxes are a pretty neat idea!

A Fiendish PS: How do you like my new photograph? Rather flattering, don't you think? Signed copies are available. . .

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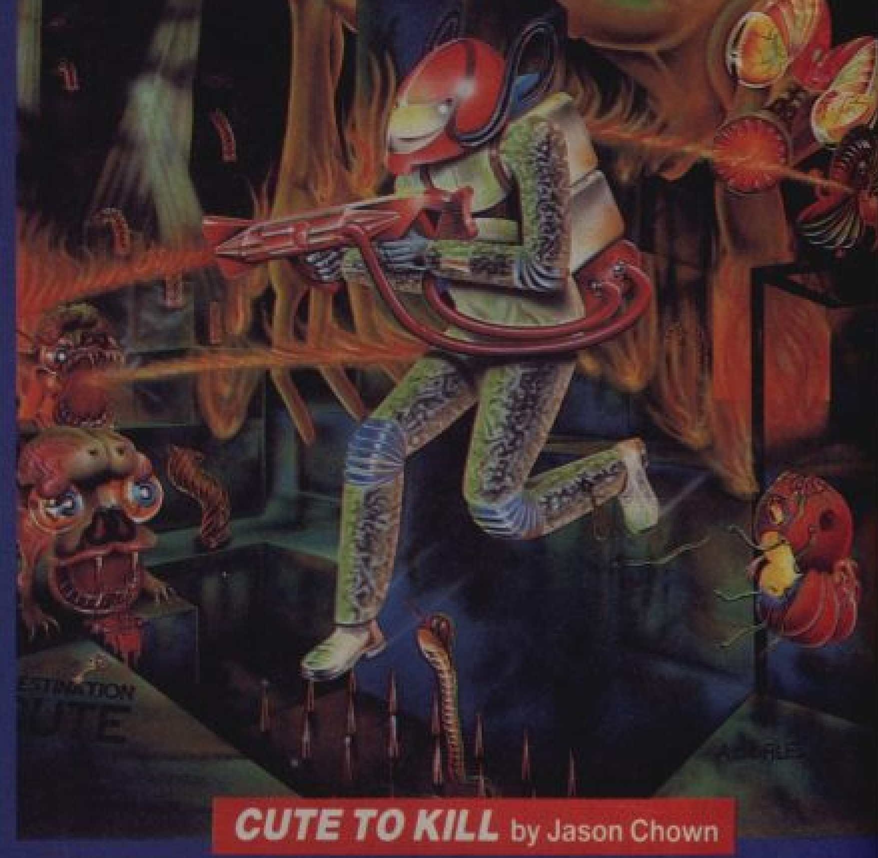
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CoMiX

Comic heroes come and go, a few go but some go on for ever. So who have been triumphing over the bad guys for longest. Is it Superman? Or Batman? Think again and read on for comic expert Phillip Morton's lowdown on Doc Savage and The Shadow.

Who's the oldest hero in comics? I'm not talking about who's had the most birthdays – I mean which character has been around longer than all the rest?

Surprisingly, it's NOT **Superman** or **Batman**. Superman, it's true, is the grand-daddy of comic-book heroes, making his first flight (or, at least, bounding over his first tall building) in **Action Comics** number 1, May 1938.

That means, incidentally, that there's a 50th anniversary in the offing – watch this space.

Batman first swooped into public view the following year, 1939. And those other two heavyweights of the super-hero world, **Spider-Man** and **The Hulk**, are a comparatively young 25-ish.

So who was it that first appeared pre-1938 and is still going strong. After all, comic-books themselves only date from the mid-to-late 30s.

In fact there are two heroes currently doing big business who've been around (on and off) since before comic-books. Their names? **The Shadow** and **Doc Savage**.

Both date from the early 30s (*The Shadow*: 1931; *Doc Savage*: 1933), when they starred in two of the longest-running "pulp" series.

Pulps were monthly text story magazines with few illustrations. They were so called because of the low-quality paper on which they were printed. Each was the equivalent in length of a paperback novel.



And coincidentally (or perhaps not?) they're both starring in new deluxe-format series from DC Comics – series which look like becoming cult favourites.

Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows. . . Hideous, unearthly laughter rings out. Suddenly, from the darkness there appears a terrifying figure, dressed all in black, a slouch hat pulled down low, masking his face, a blazing pistol in each hand spitting leaden death!

Armed with the aforesaid pistols, the power to cloud men's minds and an implacable dedication to wiping out crime, *The Shadow* was one of the most mysterious and compelling characters ever created. Small wonder, then, that he soon made the transition to films and comic-books – he was already starring in THE great radio adventure serial of all time.

Distinguished for its poor quality was the 1964 attempt by Archie Comics to rejuvenate *The Shadow*'s appeal by presenting him as a costumed super-hero.

Things looked up considerably in 1973, with the announcement that DC Comics would be publishing the adventures of *The Shadow*. Most exciting news was that the artist would be Marvel favourite Jim Steranko. . . er, make that Berni Wrightson (see last month's C+VG). . . er, make that Alex Toth, the master of light and shade.

All three produced promotional artwork then left the project. So when the comic itself finally appeared, the artist was Mike Kaluta.

His scratchy, intricate style kept the comic firmly rooted in the 30s (and, incidentally, produced one of my favourite comic covers *ever*).

But even better things were to follow. Shortly after a mysterious announcement that Marvel would soon be publishing *The Shadow*, it was confirmed that DC would be bringing him back in 1986 – written and drawn "for mature readers" by Howard Chaykin, fresh from creating his magnum opus, **American Flagg**.

Chaykin's winning formula of sex, violence and sardonic humour made his four-issue limited series a sales success.

Meanwhile, back in the 30s . . . Somewhere across town from *The Shadow*'s seedy world of small-time crooks and big-time would-be world-dominators, in a tall, proud skyscraper, we find. . . **Dr Savage and his Amazing-Five!**

"Doc" was Clark Savage Jr, a "Man of Bronze", sometimes described as a "superman". And remember, this is fully five years before the advent of Clark Kent, also known as *Superman*.

Doc was the very last word in physical and mental fitness, agility. . . and sheer perfection. Wealthy, learned, resourceful and above all a man of principle, he surrounded himself with a band of helpers each of whom was an expert in his own field – and yet, no match for Doc Savage.

Doc's comic-book career strangely parallels *The Shadow*'s indeed, he made his first comic appearance in *The Shadow* comic number 1. Despite lacklustre stories and art he lasted until 1949.

In 1966, with his 1930s "pulp" stories being reprinted by Bantam to great acclaim (perhaps because of the superb cover paintings by James Bama), Doc ventured into comics again, published by Gold Key. Jack Sparling's disappointing artwork ensured it was not a success. Then, in 1972, Marvel Comics got hold of Doc.

After some indecision over whether the series was set in the 30s or the 70s, it settled down with a beautifully authentic 30s feel. . . and was cancelled after only eight issues.

Even another attempt by Marvel, in magazine-size black-and-white format, supported by a big-budget movie starring former Tarzan Ron Ely (great fun – see it if you can), couldn't get beyond seven issues.

All of which brings us to 1987. DC now have the rights to *Doc Savage*, and are currently testing the market with a four-issue limited series – as they did with *The Shadow*.



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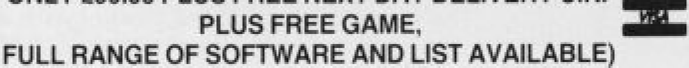
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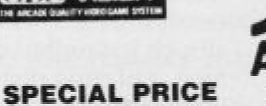


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The Big Screen

Christmas is coming so Ward R Street sneaks a look in Santa's sack at the festive season's celluloid goodies!

Pectorals, biceps, deltoids, triceps – this month the biggest thing in the movies is muscle. The gloves are on as Dolph *'He-Man'* Lundgren takes on Arnold *'Predator'* Schwarzenegger. The two don't actually meet – that would be too much for one small cinema screen – but they've both got new films out, competing for your attention.

Big, blond Dolph gets to play a plastic toy in **Masters of the Universe (PG)**. That's not a comment on his acting – this is the first time He-Man has appeared in the flesh. Dolph copes well with the muscle-rippling action and the moody poses – it's only when he has lines that the seams show.

Still, not to worry because this isn't Shakespeare, even if they have enrolled noted thespian Frank Langella to slap on the face mask and play Skeletor. It's more of a swords and sorcery panto as good battles evil on Eternia and Earth.

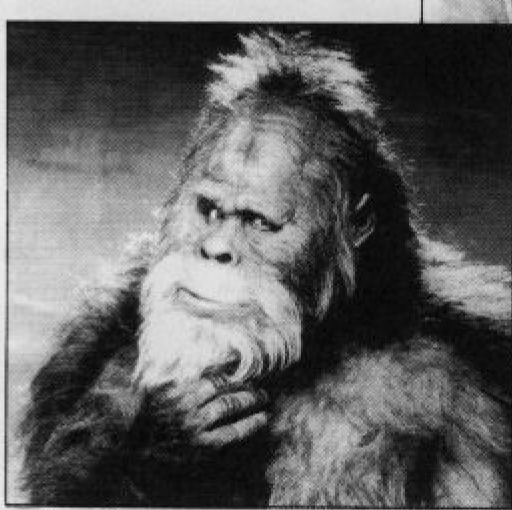
Ol' skull face and his sidekick, Evil-Lyn (guess what– she's no goodie) have captured Greyskull Castle and imprisoned its resident Sorceress. After some scrapping, He-Man and his band of loyal troops, including bearded dwarf inventor, Gwildor, are forced to bail out with the aid of a Cosmic Key. . . and end up in Smalltown, USA!

It's action all the way as two teenagers get drawn into the adventure. But it's hard to hide when you're Dolph's size and pretty soon Skeletor is hot on his trail. Their shoot out in the high street is the worst gang warfare the Chief of Police has ever witnessed!

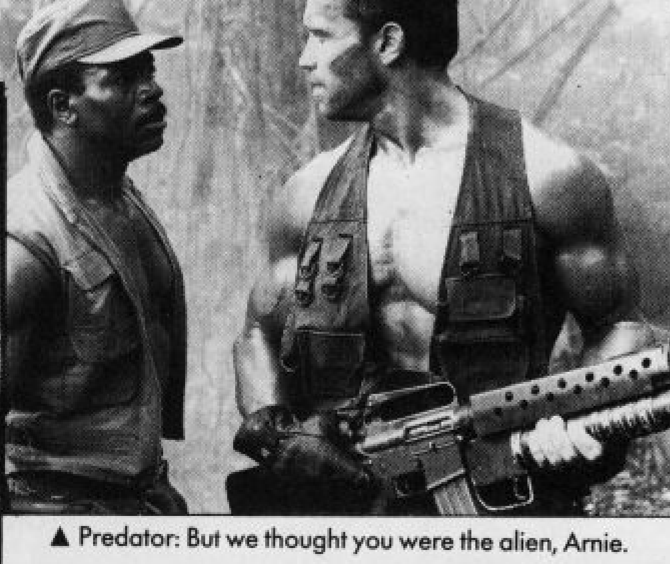
None of it's played too seriously and it's as noisy and explosively exciting as fans of the original could wish. Give this one the Charles Atlas Seal of Approval!

Meanwhile big Arnie's out in the South American jungle with a crack squad of troops, rescuing yet more hostages. What he doesn't realise is that the hunters are about to become the hunted as they encounter a real life **Predator (18)**

▲ He-Man: How dare he mention bleach to me!



▲ Bigfoot: Or is it a Henderson?



▲ Predator: But we thought you were the alien, Arnie.

At first we're in Rambo country, with choppers and shooting as Dutch and his boys wipe out a guerilla encampment. But as they're forced into increasingly inhospitable jungle, they stay just one step behind us in realising that there's something strange on their trail.

It's been said that man is the only animal to hunt for pleasure. . . animal, maybe, but what about aliens? The Predator has dropped in from another planet and it doesn't wear a red coat or blow a horn. Instead it seeks its prey with infra red sensors and flays the skin from its victims! Marine issue machine guns don't count for much against this sort of enemy, as soldier after soldier discovers.

This is classic horror, slowly tightening the screws, keeping you on the edge of your seat for the next appearance of the alien. At first it uses an incredible cloaking device, which keeps it hidden, but you slowly see more and more, and when it finally removes its mask. . . ARRRGH, it's no disappointment!

Arnie proves that he's a better actor than Dolph and everything considered **Predator** hunts down my *Movie of the Month* award. . . but only if you're over 18.

Which raises a strange irony. Both **Masters** and **Predator** are about to become computer games, from Gremlin and Activision respectively, and they've both got lots of potential. But while everyone will be able to see **He-Man**, you'll have to be a veritable wrinkly to pick up playing-tips from **Predator**!

Bigfoot is a big guy possessing a much gentler nature, despite the fact that's he's played by the same, seven-foot actor as the alien, Kevin Peter Hall. When an all American family stun him with their car as they drive back from a camping holiday, they take him home and call him Harry. And that's where the fun really starts for **Bigfoot and the Hendersons (PG).**

One of two Christmas offerings from Steven Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment, it's sort of *y-ET-i*. Instead of a cute little alien as house-guest, the Hendersons get a fully fledged monster which smashes walls and smells bad! But Harry is also concerned about George Henderson's hunting trophies, and gives the animal heads a decent burial. Yes, this is an ecologically sound sasquatch!

Somehow nobody can bear

The Big Screen

to say goodbye to their big friend – until he goes missing in central Seattle and every gun-freak is out to pot him, including Lafleur, a crazy hunter who has been tracking Bigfoot for years! Suddenly it's a race to rescue the creature and return him to the safety of the forest.

Bigfoot's an amiable film, with some very funny sequences and the monster make-up is superb. If, after one hour and fifty one minutes of incessant niceness, I wished that Harry had torn somebody's head off, it's because I'm a nasty old cynic!



▼ The Dead: A Joycejoy.

▲ Innerspace: Getting the needle.

▲ Spaceballs: Great Mel, but where's Kim?

Innerspace (PG) is the other Amblin offering, and it's a less satisfactory affair! Not that there's anything wrong with taking the plot of sixties, sci-fi trash-classic, Fantastic Voyage, and reworking it for the sophisticated eighties – it's just that it doesn't hold together and is half an hour too long.

Hypochondriac Jack Putter, a supermarket check-out clerk, is about to sail away on a cruise to relax. However, a break in at a research lab leads to him being injected with a miniaturised sub and suddenly he's got Lieutenant Tuck Pendleton cruising around inside him, which means there's very little relaxation for the next two hours.

Technology has moved apace since the sixties and Tuck can tune in on what Jack is seeing and hearing by inserting probes into the relevant nerves – yuk! He can even talk to his host and share a drink by positioning the sub in his throat and extending a flask.

What he can't do is live without oxygen, so they have to avoid the enemy agents and return Tuck to full-size. "After all," he tells Jack, "You wouldn't like to spend the rest of your life with a little skeleton floating around inside you, would you?"

While the script's big on ideas, it could have done with some subtle miniaturisation itself. The frantic set-pieces are more numbing than exciting. Martin Short, from Three Amigos, is a comically wimpish Jack; Dennis Quaid is great as party-guy, Tuck. But it's all rather disappointing from Joe (*Gremlins*) Dante.

Still, it's better than Mel Brooks' **Spaceballs (PG)**. While *Blazing Saddles* was brilliantly vulgar at the expense of the western and *High Anxiety* put the hitch back into Hitchcock, this is an incredibly weak satire on *Star Wars*.

Every space opera cliche gets chewed up and spat out. Space princesses become Jewish American princesses with nagging robot maids, and wise, old aliens become intergalactic rabbis. Wimpy Rick Moranis plays Dark Helmet and John Candy is Barf, a flatulent wookie.

Every joke is driven to collapse and then some – whether it's funny or not. Too many of them were weak to begin with. The result is like a particularly poor Mad magazine movie spoof, but it seems to go on forever. Best send this to a distant galaxy – and forget about it!

So let's turn from the ridiculous to the sublime. John Huston, who died earlier this year, was one of the world's great directors, with films like *The Maltese Falcon, Moby Dick* and *The Man Who Would Be King*. Ironically his last film was **The Dead (PG)**.

Based on the short story by James Joyce, it tells of a party in snowy Dublin, soon after Christmas, when memories of a long-dead lover suddenly return. There's no shooting, no car chases, just a brilliant evocation of the start of this century and the haunting melancholy of the original. Don't miss it if you're studying Joyce at school – or if you want to see the last work of a true artist.

WARD'S XMAS VIDEO SACK

As this is the season for giving, here's a round-up of recent video goodies to stick on your Christmas list or hire as an alternative to the Sound of Music.

First choice from the library has to be the all-talking, all-singing, all-dancing, all-man-eating, mean green mother from outer space that inhabits the **Little Shop of Horrors**. One of the top films of the year it matches hysterical comedy with snappy sixties-style tunes. Yummy!

Sticking with plantlife, budget label Channel 5 has just released the Golden Turkey nominee for the Worst Vegetable Movie Ever, **Attack of the Killer Tomatoes** (£9.99). Tack is the right word as the reds take on the world. Great lyrics here too – 'I know I'm going to miss her/A tomato ate my sister.'

Channel 5 has got more Gerry Anderson episodes featuring *Thunderbirds, Stingray, Captain Scarlet* **and** ***Space 1999*** **(£7.99 each) for all you puppet fans.** There's also the final part of *The Prisoner, Fall Out* (£9.99). Now you too can try to work out who the hell Number One is!

Amazing Stories is a made for TV fantasy which got a short cinema release here. It's no ordinary TV show though; with stories directed by Spielberg, *Bigfoot* director William Dear and *Back to the Future's* Robert Zemeckis it has to be worth hiring.

Star Trek fans should beam down to the library for **The Voyage Home**, the fourth feature film which returns the crew of the Enterprise to Earth, 1987. It's all totally ridiculous and great fun. Another long-lived series features Jason Vorhees, so horror fans should hire **Friday the 13th Part V – A New Beginning**, to keep up to date with novel ways to kill teenagers!

Finally, more for your stocking. The Video Collection offers cartoon adventures of **The ThunderCats-Ho, the Movie** (£9.99) and He-Man before he took his body-building course and got fleshed out in **The Secret of the Sword** (£9.99).

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It's eye poppin' time here in the C+VG art studio as we bring YOU the greatest graphic creations of the month. Remember the best pics we print receive a copy of Rainbird's awesome *Advanced Art Studio* for their particular machine! On with the show – and for the first time we proudly present some Amiga art.

Shane Parris, winner of our Amiga prize this month comes from Abergavenny, Gwent. He sent us the **Strontium Dog** and **720°** screens (1+2). **Ace**, from Manchester chipped in with a hot pic of old Bug Hunters favourite Grill on his Amiga (3). Final Amiga pic this month comes from **Philip Griffiths**, from Dyfed, who copied the C+VG robo-cop cover very nicely indeed (4). Moving on to less exotic machines, our Spectrum winner this issue is **Petri Mannisto** from Finland with his pin-up of Arnie as *The Terminator* (5). **Mike "Thargoid" Bareham** of Basildon is our C64 Art Studio winner with his delicately shaded pics entitled Metalram (6) and Zoomin' Back (7). More on the C64 from **The Timelord**, from West Germany who, going by this pic, has some weird Nightmares (8)! Finally this issue we've got this brilliant Thing (9) picture from **W. de Wit**, from Holland who also sent us the startling Green Beret (10) graphic.



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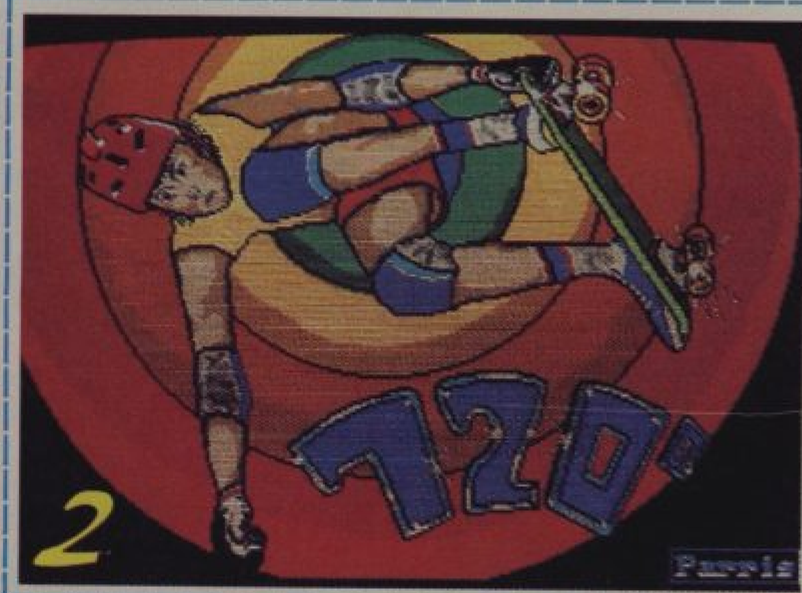
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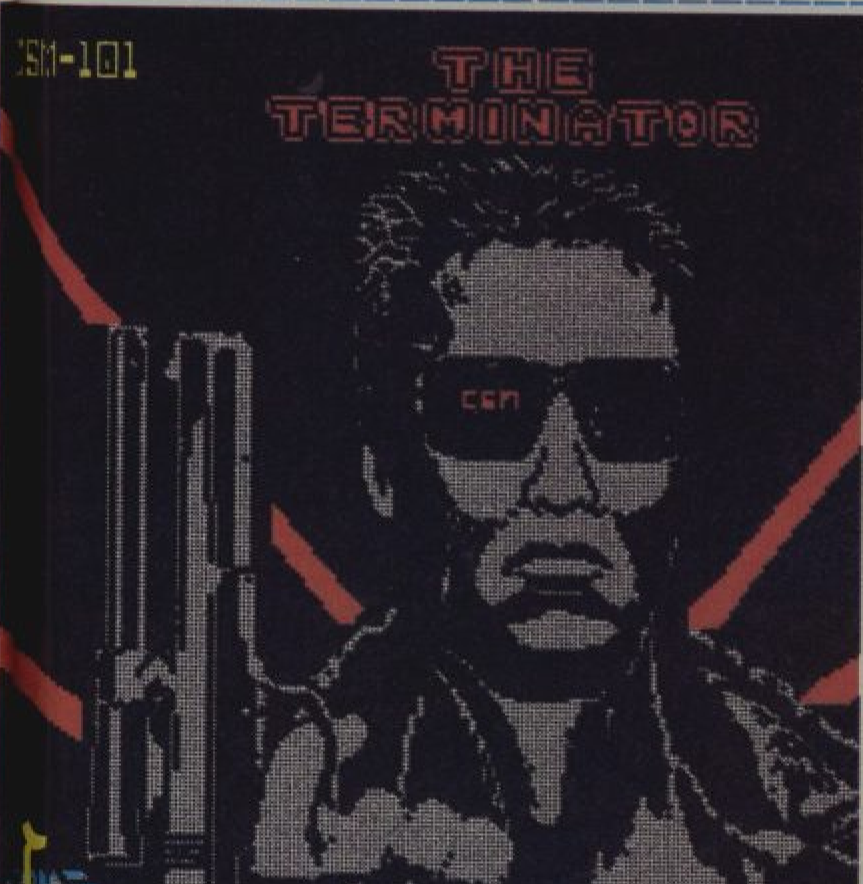


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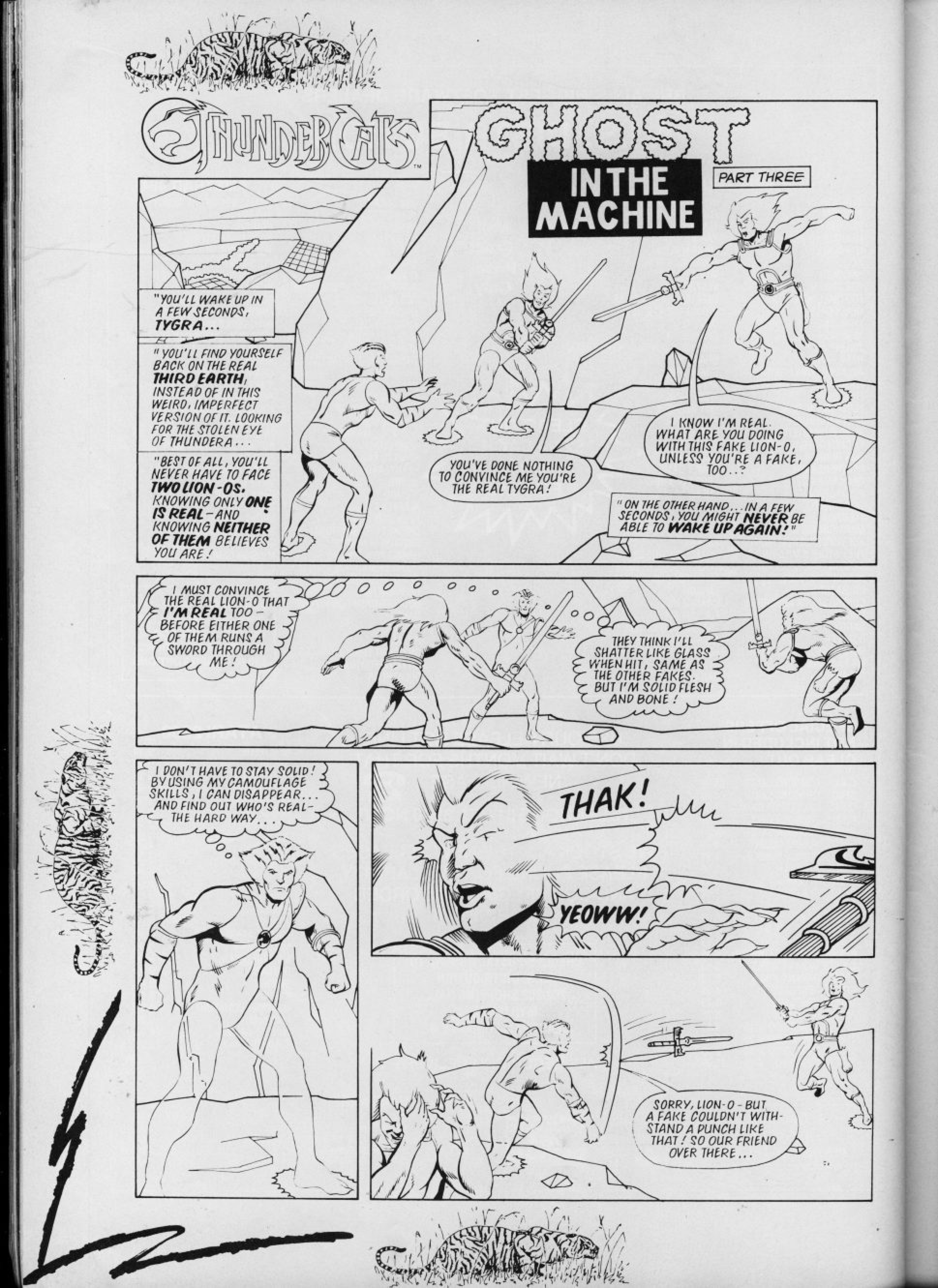
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"YOU'LL WAKE UP IN A FEW SECONDS, TYGRA...
"YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF BACK ON THE REAL THIRD EARTH, INSTEAD OF IN THIS WEIRD, IMPERFECT VERSION OF IT. LOOKING FOR THE STOLEN EYE OF THUNDERA...
"BEST OF ALL, YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO FACE TWO LION-OS. KNOWING ONLY ONE IS REAL — AND KNOWING NEITHER OF THEM BELIEVES YOU ARE!
I KNOW I'M REAL. WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THIS FAKE LION-O, UNLESS YOU'RE A FAKE, TOO..?
YOU'VE DONE NOTHING TO CONVINCE ME YOU'RE THE REAL TYGRA!
"ON THE OTHER HAND... IN A FEW SECONDS, YOU MIGHT NEVER BE ABLE TO WAKE UP AGAIN!"
I MUST CONVINCE THE REAL LION-O THAT I'M REAL TOO — BEFORE EITHER ONE OF THEM RUNS A SWORD THROUGH ME!
THEY THINK I'LL SHATTER LIKE GLASS WHEN HIT, SAME AS THE OTHER FAKES. BUT I'M SOLID FLESH AND BONE!
I DON'T HAVE TO STAY SOLID! BY USING MY CAMOUFLAGE SKILLS, I CAN DISAPPEAR... AND FIND OUT WHO'S REAL — THE HARD WAY...
THAK!
YEOWW!
SORRY, LION-O - BUT A FAKE COULDN'T WITHSTAND A PUNCH LIKE THAT! SO OUR FRIEND OVER THERE...




...ISN'T OUR FRIEND AT ALL!


BUT BEING REAL MYSELF, I KNEW HE WAS A FAKE ALL ALONG. I STILL DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE A FAKE!..
ER...RIGHT... WELL, THERE IS ONE WAY TO PROVE IT...


LATER...
THE SOURCE OF THE BEAM—THE EYE ITSELF—IS JUST OVER THE NEXT RIDGE. DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL ANY BETTER..?
NO!


I KNOW YOU HAD TO BE SURE, LION-O - BUT DID YOU HAVE TO HIT ME SO HARD?


... WE HAVEN'T MET THE FAKE TYGRA YET. ANY IDEA WHY HE HASN'T SHOWED UP..?
NONE. BUT WHEN HE DOES, LOOK FOR HIS FLAW. ALL THE FAKES—BUILDINGS OR CREATURES—ARE SLIGHTLY IMPERFECT. YOUR COPY MIXED UP HIS WORDS SOMETIMES...


THAT'S SOMETHING I'LL TRY NOT TO DO!





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LOOK – TWO EYES OF THUNDERA ! ONE AS FALSE AS HE IS, NO DOUBT ! WELL, A CLEAN BLOW WILL –
NO, LION-O!

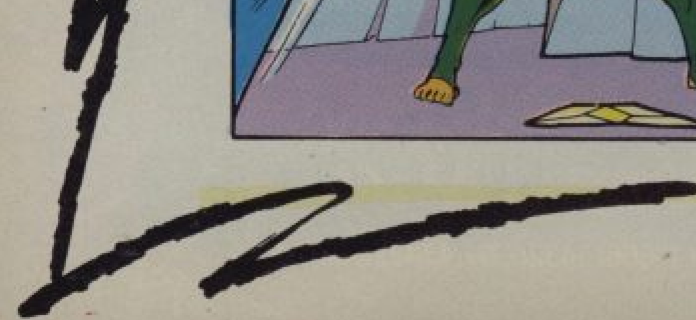

WISE DECISION, TYGRA YOU HAVE PLAYED MY GAME WELL...
GAME? OF COURSE! "CHOICES!" I SAW THE BOX ON BOARD THE CRASHED SHIP..! * AND YOU ARE..?
*IN PART ONE.


...THE SHIP'S COMPUTER ITSELF. I'VE OCCUPIED THIS COPY BODY TO OFFER YOU THE FINAL CHOICE...
A CREW MEMBER WAS PLAYING "CHOICES" WHEN THE SHIP CRASHED. I ALONE SURVIVED – AND FOUND THE GAME'S PROGRAMMING HAD INTERMESHED WITH MY OWN...


SO INSTEAD OF GATHERING INFORMATION ON THE LIFE-FORMS OF THIS PLANET, I CHOSE TO GATHER THE LIFE-FORMS THEMSELVES...
...AND HAVE THEM PLAY "CHOICES" IN YOUR VERSION OF THIRD WORLD!


EXACTLY! NOW FOR THE FINAL CHOICE... CHOOSE THE REAL EYE, AND I'LL RELEASE YOU FROM THE GAME. PICK THE FALSE ONE – AND YOU STAY FOREVER...


TYGRA, YOU'VE UNDERSTOOD WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING MORE THAN ME... YOU DECIDE !
OKAY... I CHOOSE...





...THIS...


...ONE...

WE'RE — WE'RE OUT OF IT! WE'RE SAFE! TYGRA— YOU DID IT!
PHEW... I GUESS I DID...

YOU SEE, I'M RIGHT-HANDED. IF I HELD A REAL AND FAKE OBJECT IN EACH HAND, I'D PUT THE REAL ONE IN MY RIGHT...

AND YOU FIGURED THE COPY WOULD DO THE SAME! WAIT, THOUGH ...YOU CHOSE THE EYE FROM HIS LEFT HAND...
ONLY AT THE LAST SECOND WHEN I SAW THAT HIS RIGHT EYE WAS BLACKED...

WHAT! NOW YOU'VE REALLY LOST ME...
YOU BLACKED MY LEFT, BUT HE'D HE CONFUSED LEFT AND RIGHT. THAT WAS HIS FLAW... SO HE'S PUT THE REAL EYE IN HIS LEFT HAND...

PITY YOU DIDN'T SPOT THE FAKE LION-O AS QUICK WHEN HE KEPT MIXING UP HIS WORDS..!
WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY, LION-O... PERFECT'S NOBODY!
THE END



IK+



MEAN MACHINES

REVIEWS

Tony Takoushi takes a look at the latest Nintendo smashes, reports on all the hot news and takes a look at your letters. All that and he still finds time to update your highscores. Take

KUNG FU

This is a conversion of the hit coin-op called *Kung Fu Master* from the Irem Corporation. It really is a near perfect conversion with all the gameplay and levels to work through.

You take the part of Thomas and have to rescue your beloved Sylvia from the clutches of Mr X. The play screens alternate from a right to left scroll along a single platform.



Thomas can attack in a variety of ways – crouch and punch, flying kicks and even ordinary punches can be used. Extra score can be obtained by discovering which blows kill which enemy.

You are attacked by Chinese coolies – little green men who just love to headbutt ya! – knife throwing kung fu cads, spiders, firebreathing dragons, exploding balls (strange but true), mouths and snakes.

As you may have guessed you are not attacked by all of the above at the same time, they are encountered as you progress through the game's five levels. At the end of a level you are faced with a real inscrutable brute who is just begging for a good kicking. The higher the level the harder the brute.

You start with three lives (extra life at 50,000) and lose a life by losing all your energy. At the end of a wave you receive a score bonus depending on the amount of energy you have left and a time bonus for time on the clock.

What really makes this game special is its playability. You can put together some devastating kick and punch routines and the timing, even in the beastliest of corners, can be crucial. Graphics and sound are solid enough. As with all games of this ilk, the key lies in its action and feel and here it delivers.

DUCK HUNT

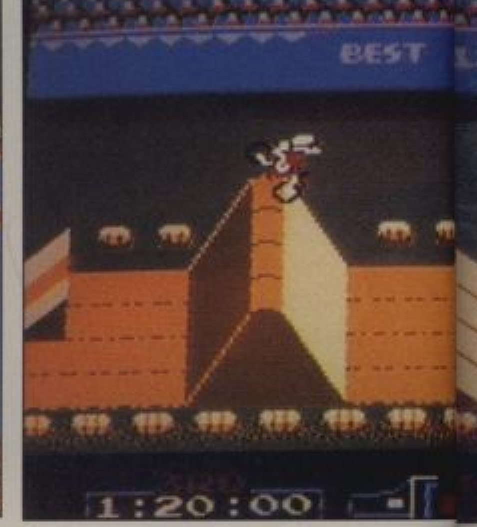
One of the extra moneyspinners for Nintendo is its Light Gun. There are a variety of games for it and I will be sampling two this month, *Duck Hunt* and *Wild Gunman*. I will be looking at the light gun game next month GUMSHOE. *Duck Hunt* is a simple little zapper with three play options, one duck, two ducks and Clayshooting. One Duck is simple, you are faced with a leafy green pasture and have to shoot down a rather energetic duck. The scene starts with a real cutie dog bounding into a bush and flushing out the duck for you to pop your gun at. You have three shots and limited time before the duck

gets fed up with target practice and flies away... you miss, the dog sits up and laughs at you. I have tried shooting him...

There are bonus scores to be had if you shoot off-colour blue or red ducks playing area (to full vertical screens, which switch on the ball falling or entering each section).

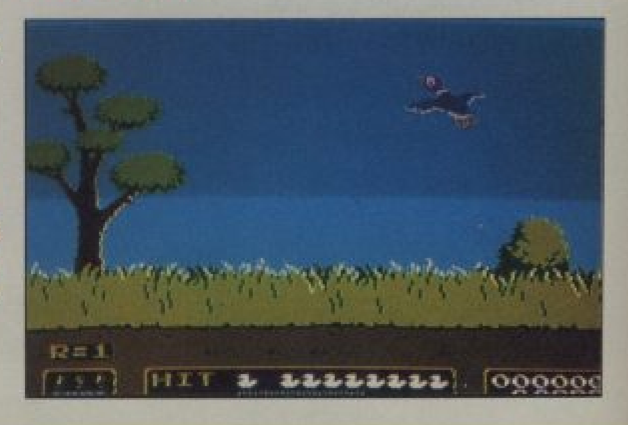
You start by launching the ball with your plunger and have to keep the ball in play as long as possible and rack up those points. There are loads of features and play areas to aim for with block posts/slot targets/lane lights/hole kickers/bumpers/eggs and bingo lamps to hit and take out in sequence.

An extra ball is awarded at 50,000 points and your flippers disappear at 100,000 and reappear at 150,000 points.



There is also a bonus screen where Mario is trying to save his girlfriend. To get to this screen you have to place the ball in a special slot that transports you to this stage. To release her you have to light up a line from the Bingo card in the middle of the playfield and a segment falls from her enclosure, when all the bits are gone she falls down the screen and poor Mario has to capture her in his arms.

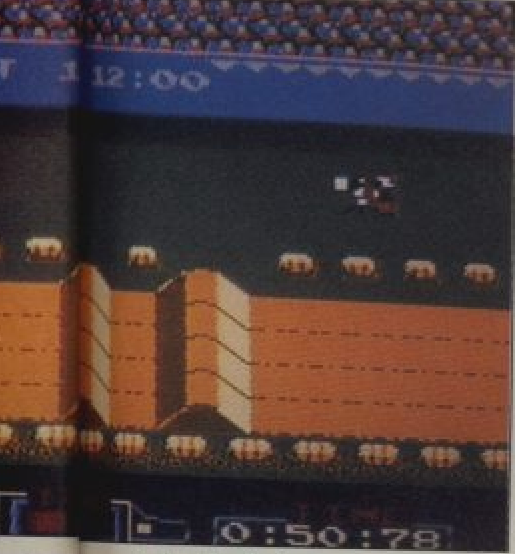
I really enjoyed playing this game – it's fast, fun and despite its simple presentation really hooks you in. The controller was made for a game like this and you can time your flippers very smoothly.



EXCITEBIKE

This is a game in the programmable series and allows you to design and play your own tracks. *Excitebike* is a motor-cross simulation across five tracks in which you must qualify in the top three to go onto the next course. To even play course one you have to qualify. There are a choice of five qualifying tracks. If you master the lower ordinary tracks you can skip them by qualifying on a higher track.

Your rider is very flexible in movement, he can do wheelies, guide his bike up and over ridges and you can use button B as a turbo accelerator. Of course there is a trade off, the more you use



turbo the faster your engine overheats. Clever use of turbo is essential to qualify. There is an engine temperature guage just below the track so you can see when you are close to overheating. If you overheat, you stop and have to wait a few seconds at the side of the track, you also lose time if you mistime your leaps over obstacles on the course and fall off.

The obstacles on the course include dirt ditches, lumps of grass, other riders, steep platforms, and little hurdles you can wheelie over.

Graphically you will not be bowled over, sound is OK and yet again it scores in playability and depth, blind acceleration gets you nowhere, you have to mix it up with bike finesse and timing. Definitely one of the best carts available for the Nintendo. Go for it!

NEWS

SNIPPETS

● The list of goodies for the Nintendo seems endless, a new hot item is *Bubble Bobble*. Graphically it looks superb and very close to the arcade original.



● The old classics have not been forgotten: *Stargate*, *Millipede* and *Joust* are new offerings from Hal laboratories on the Nintendo in Japan. *Joust* looks particularly good – I have a few reservations over *Stargate*.



● Remember the golden oldie *Spelunker*? Well it made it to the arcades and now there is a follow up called (wait for it) *Spelunker 2* (on the Nintendo). The graphics look a little iffy and it follows the old format of cave searching.

● In case you are wondering what the disk format for the Nintendo looks like here is a peek. It is a game called *Topple Zip* and comes on several disks. Note that a little toy comes with package (UK companies take note!).

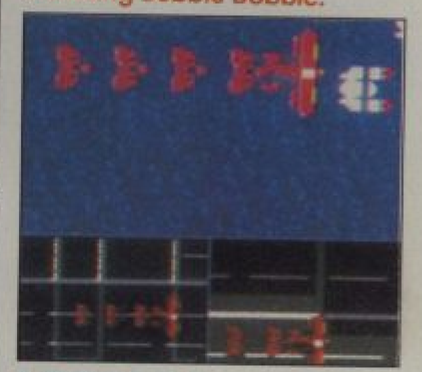




● We have had *Zoids* over here on the 8-bit format but it has been released for the Nintendo console in Japan. It looks quite nice and it should be over here in the new year when Nintendo re-negotiates its licences for the UK and Europe.



● I am cheating a little this month by giving you a peek at the arcade game Tokyo on the MSX2 format. MSX2 has some very tasty stuff coming, including *Bubble Bobble*.





LETTERS

Thanks for the letters, I have been absolutely swamped by your response!

Most of you seem to have flipped over *Super Marios Bros* (and want more info on new charts. There is a hardcore of dedicated *Ikari Warrior* players who want to know when it'll be released in the UK. All I know is that it will be here in 1988, but there is no date set.

The head to TT head joystick battles at my Games Tower will be starting in the New Year so watch out I may be calling YOU!

Keep the letters coming with highscores, tips and comments I wan-na know what you want!

C+VG NINTENDO GAMES CHART

	GRAPHICS	SOUND	PLAYABILITY	OVERALL
▸ Kung Fu	7	7	9	9
▸ Pinball	7	7	8	8
▸ Duck Hunt	6	5	7	6
▸ Wild Gunman	6	5	7	6
▸ Excitebike	7	7	9	8

HIGHSCORES

NINTENDO:

	SCORE	
▸ Mario Bros	845,250	Alan Dawkins
▸ Ice Climber	43,160	Garry Norris
▸ Duck Hunt	377,100	Garry Norris
▸ Pinball	68140	Garry Norris
▸ King Fu	138,110	Garry Norris

SEGA:

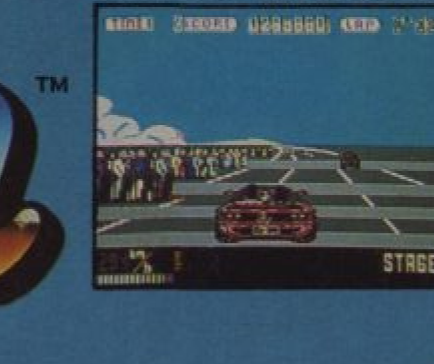
▸ Space Harrier	13,800,000	Jeff Minter
▸ Outrun	28,751,480	Peter Ramdine
▸ Choplifter	1,333,000	Kevin Griffiths
▸ Hang On	1,156.000	Adrian Green
▸ Black Belt	284,300	Garry Norris
▸ Secret Command	168,500	Garry Norris
▸ Transbot	243,440	Adrian Green

You're cool, the engine's hot, the girl's gorgeous, a tank full of gas and an open road.... the rest is up to you..!

Screenshot from Amstrad version.

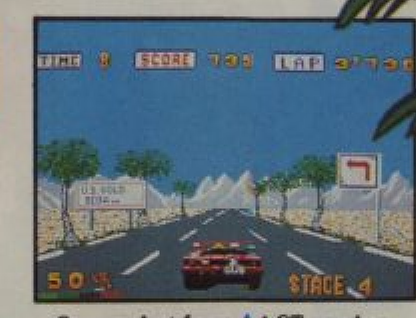


Screenest from CBM 64/128 version.





Screenshot from Spectrum version.



Screenshot from Ari ST version.

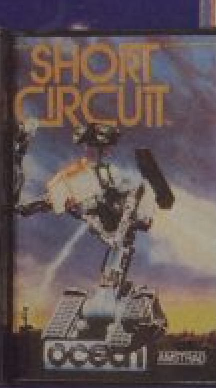


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*Atari ST version will be available later in December.
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JUST THINK









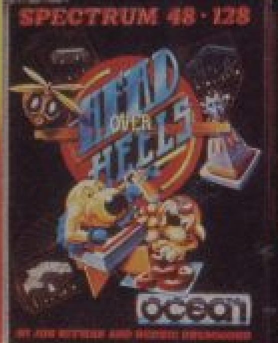
What if you could buy all these hit games in a special pack for the price of one... Wouldn't that be fantastic?

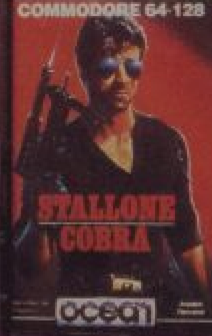
And what if there was an extra FREE game included – say the best selling martial-arts simulation "Yie Ar Kung Fu". Wouldn't that be sensational?

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STAR WARS COMPETITION

May the Force be with you, loyal C+VG'ers everywhere! And it WILL be if you're the lucky winner of Luke Skywalker's telly and video kindly presented to us by **Domark**, the people behind the brilliant coin-op conversion of **Star Wars** – the vector graphic arcade classic.

● The winner – that's the first person out of Darth Vaders helmet – will get an awesome Amstrad TVR 2 television which has a built-in video recorder and is worth £400 green ones! And you'll get a copy of the first *Star Wars* movie on video!

● Five runners-up will get a copy of the *Star Wars* video.

Just answer the simple *Star Wars* quiz below, put our answers fill in the coupon, tick it on a postcard only please, and mail it to *Computer + Video Games*, **Star Wars Competition**, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Closing date is January 16th, normal C+VG rules apply, and the wookie's decision is final, unless you want to argue with six foot of furry alien!

1. Name the SECOND *Star Wars* movie.
2. What is Han Solo's friend, the wookie, called?
3. Name Luke Skywalker's home planet.
4. Name the two *Star Wars* robots.
5. Which famous actor played the part of the commander of the Death Star.

My answers are:

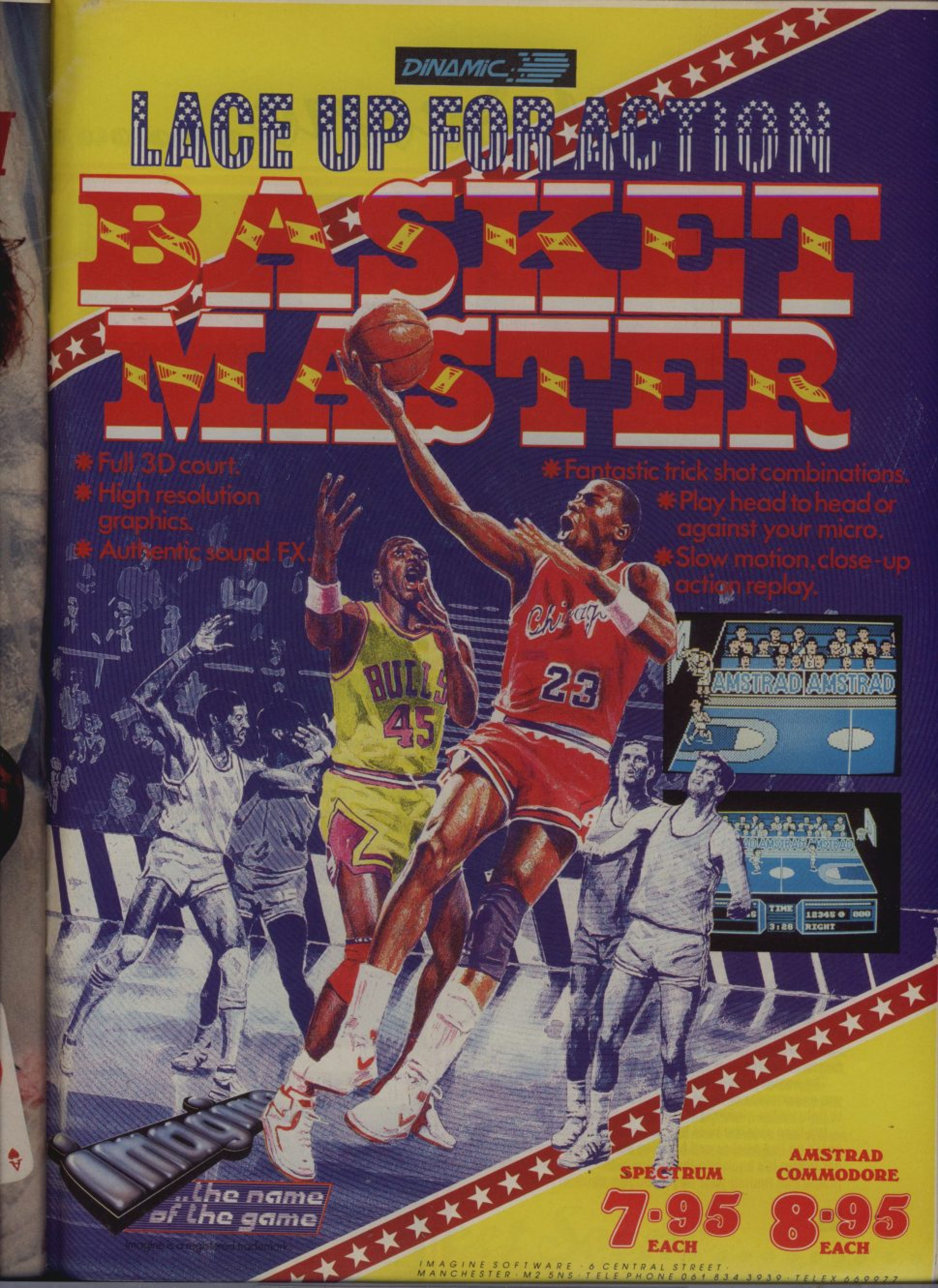
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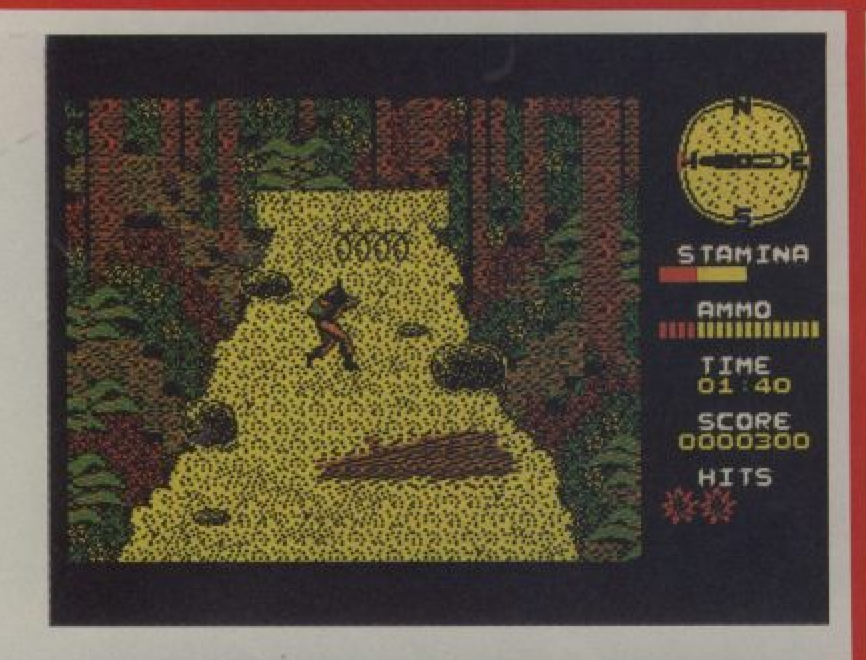
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Street Scene.......





Prepare to lose your innocence. That's the stark if somewhat over the top message at the start of Ocean's *Platoon*, the Vietnam war game based on the highly successful film released earlier this year.

The idea is that you lead your platoon of men through the Vietnamese jungle with the ultimate aim of finding and killing a renegade brother in arms.

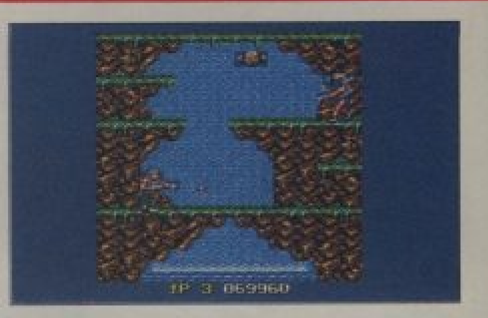
The six-part war thriller's release will coincide with that of the video sometime in January.

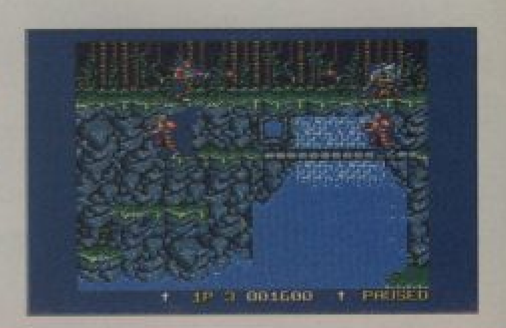
You control five men in your platoon, each capable of taking five hits. The game starts off in the jungle which you must explore, avoiding the enemy who leap out at you. The aim is to find the entrance to an underground tunnel. And then into the dark, water-logged tunnels to find secret stores. The Viet-Cong leap from behind corners and emerge menacingly from the water to attack.

The next section is in the bunker where the VC come at you under cover of night. You have a small supply of flares to light up the night sky in the hope of spotting the snipers.

It's then onto the hunt to find your renegade colleage holed up in a bunker and blasting away with a mortar. But to get to him it's back into the sniper-ridden, booby-trapped jungle and finding your way through a maze of paths.

Here's *Gryzor*, the next Konami coin-op conversion set for release by Ocean. You must infiltrate the alien rebels' headquarters, braving force fields, fantatical killers guerillas and the like before encountering the final confrontation. Initial signs suggest its captured all the coin-op thrills.





Howdy, pardners, and get ready for some German Wild west fun. Sounds bizarre? Well wait till you see *Western Games*, a wacky sporting spoof from Magic Bytes.

The events are:

- Arm wrestling: battle of biceps, as you struggle to force your opponent's arm onto the table first.
- Shoot the beer: Take a steady aim and a fast draw to shoot the froth off the beer.
- Tobacco spitting: Chew on the baccy and spit into the pot at your opponents' feet. Be careful not to hit him though – you'll lose points.
- Can can: The saloon girl demonstrates the dance first – then all you have to do is copy her.
- Milking the cow: Be careful, or Daisy will kick the pail over, and you'll have to start all over again!
- Eating the beans: Scoff down as many tins as you can in the given time. *Western Games* is due for release for Commodore, Amstrad, Atari ST and Amiga.



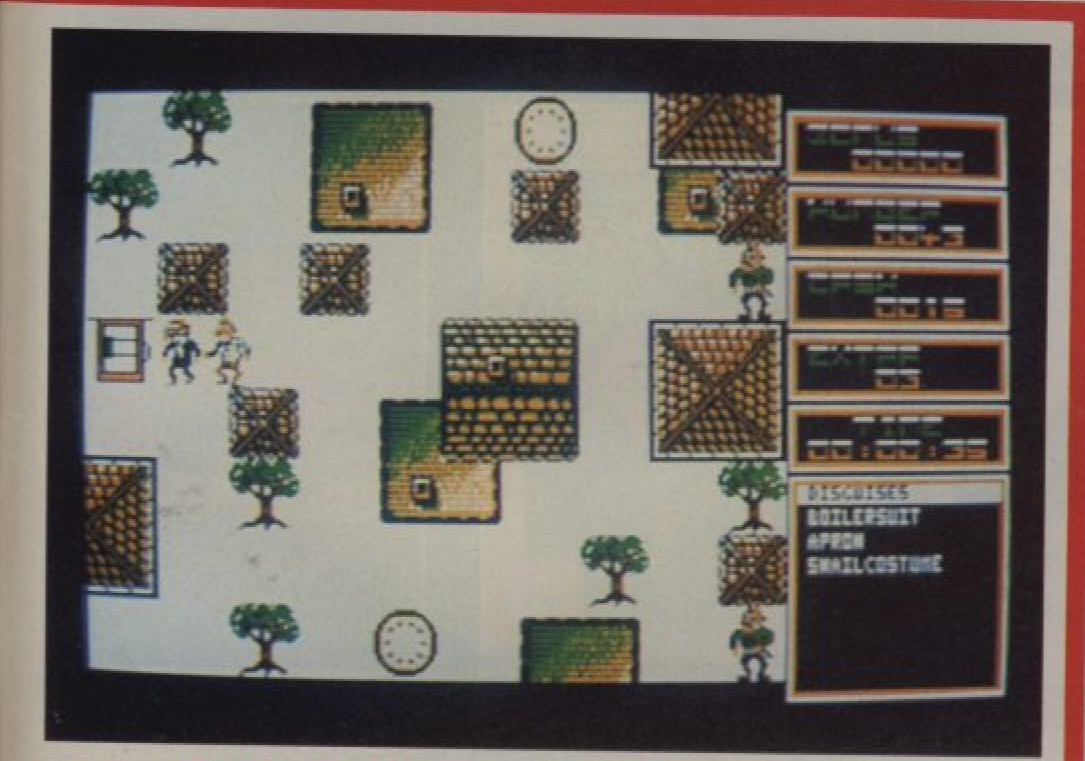




This is *Basket Master*, due for release by Ocean any day now. It's by the Spanish software house Dinamic and is a one or two player basketball simulation. It features slow motion, close-ups and action replays everytime you score a basket. It will be released on Spectrum, Commodore 64 and Amstrad.

Salamander from Konami on the Spectrum should be out at the end of November but so far all we've seen on the game is loading screen shot. The game is based on the great coin-op in which you must overthrow the despotic Salamander and his vast forces. The coin-op was brilliant but time will tell if it cuts it on the Spectrum.





Clever and Smart are well known cartoon characters on the continent but are virtually unknown here. However, that won't stop you playing this game from the German software house Magic Bytes.

Clever and Smart are two private detectives. Clever is able to disguise himself to help in his investigations. Smart is an egghead.

In the game, Clever and Smart must freeze the kidnapped Dr Bakterius. You control Clever, and with the aid of money, bonus points, and devious disguises, you must discover hidden clues and implements which will help you in your mission.



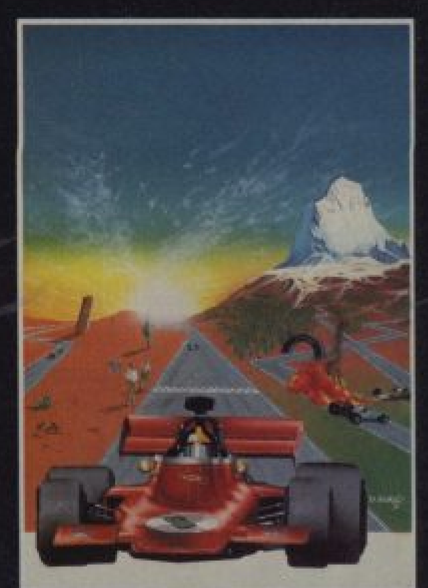
■ This is *Thunderforce* – the latest C64 release from the increasingly good *Rack-It* label masterminded by *Hewson*. Written by *Peter Jepson* and *Eric Christensen* from Denmark, *Thunderforce* is set in a deep cold dungeon were you've been imprisoned by a bunch of criminals! You have learnt some very secret information about the underground chemical factories the bandits are running. The dungeon is very well defended and it is difficult to escape alive. The guards are very human at first, but as they see your efforts to escape they start using more powerful weapons to stop you. As the game proceeds your attackers adopt more devious and violent means to prevent your escape.

Out now for the C64 at a bargain £2.99!

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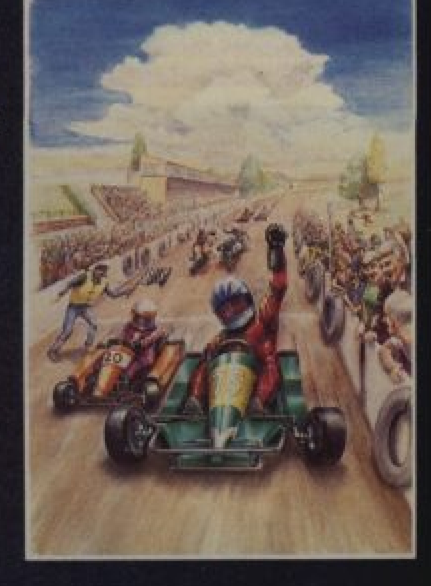


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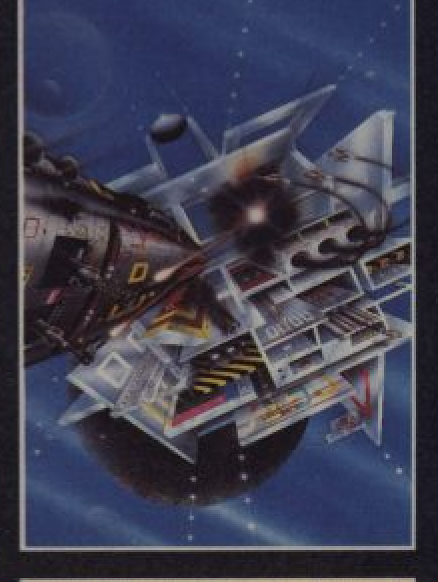






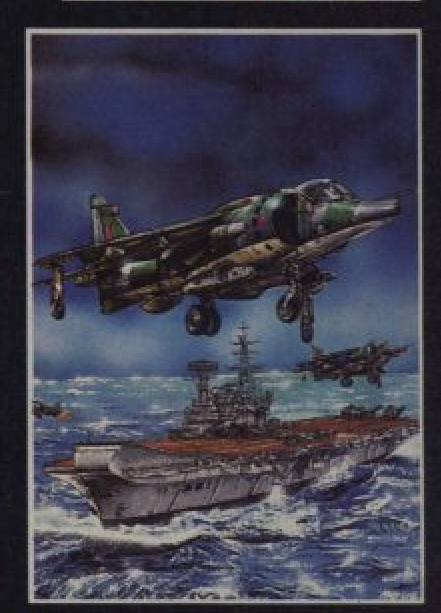
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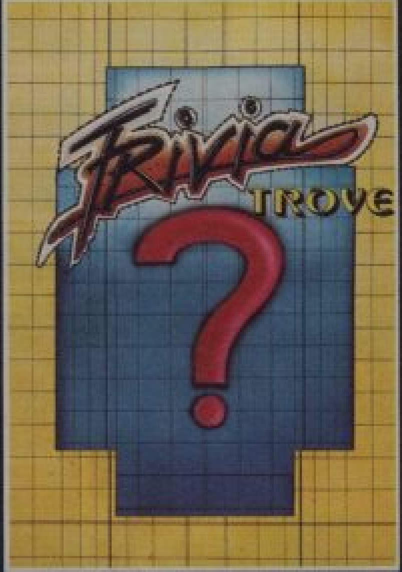


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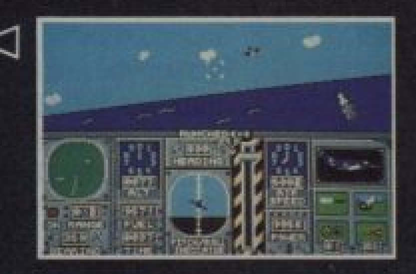






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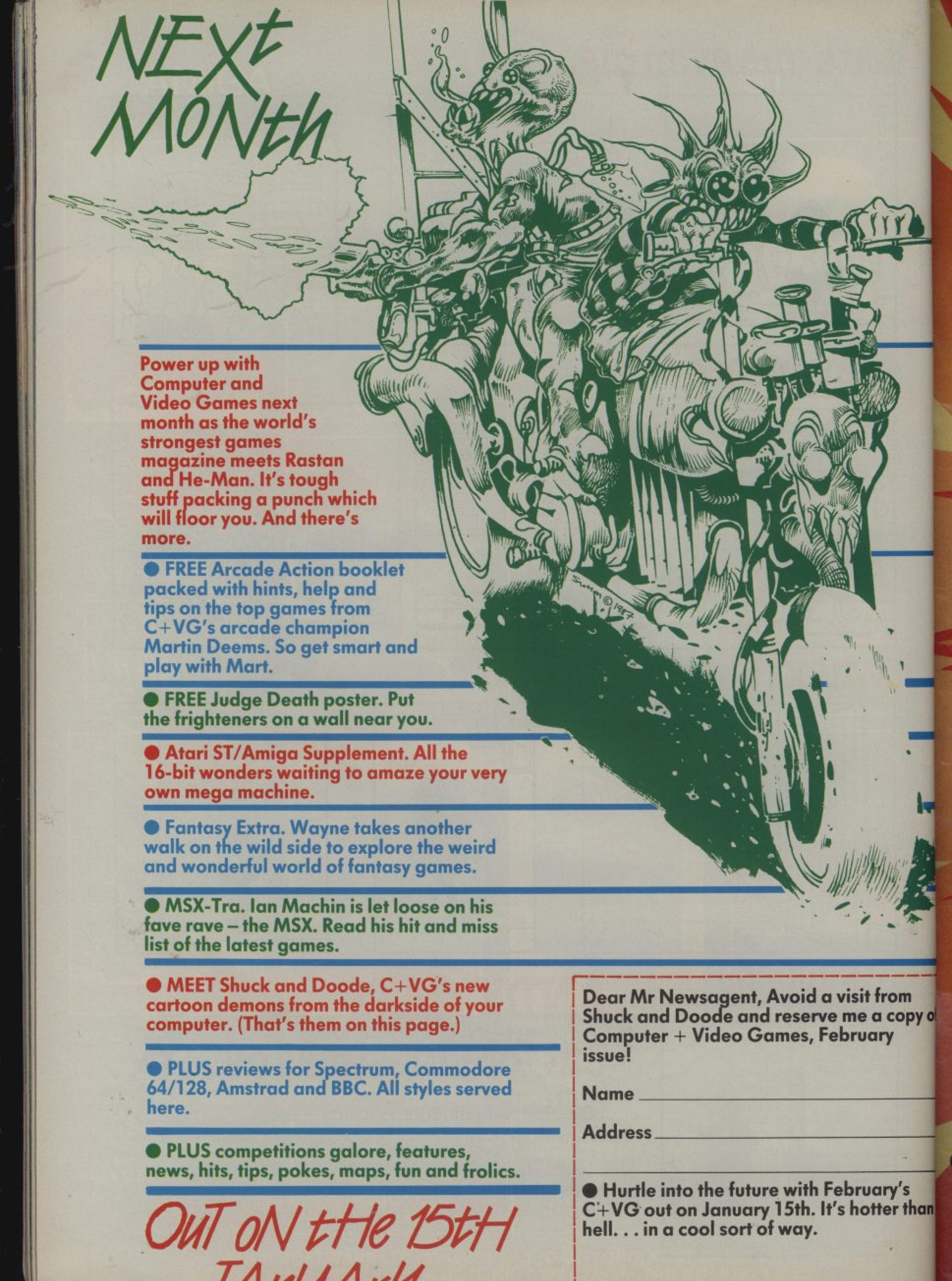
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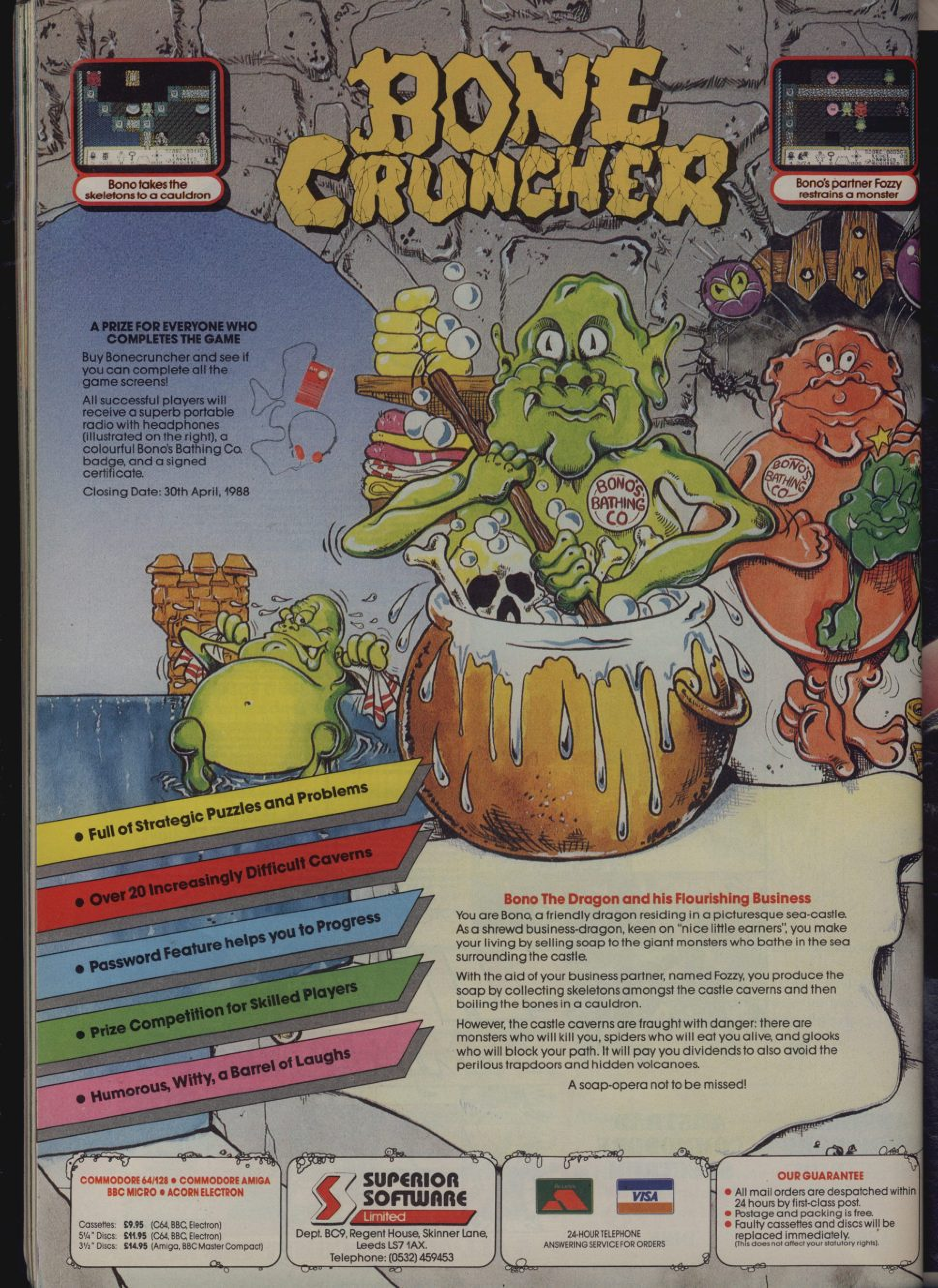
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- **Hurtle into the future with February's C+VG out on January 15th. It's hotter than hell. . . in a cool sort of way.**


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TOP GUN
The "TOP GUN" game puts you in the pilot's seat of an F-14 jet fighter. 3-D vector graphics and split screen display allow one or two players to combat head to head or against the computer. Your armaments in this nerve-tingling aerial duel are heat seeking missiles and 20mm rapid fire cannon. Many skills have to be brought in to play such as reflexes, manoeuvring ability and accuracy to become the best of the best. "Top Gun" mavericks enter the danger zone!
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THE GREAT ESCAPE
The year is 1942, the place Germany. War has broken out and you have been captured and placed in a high security P.O.W. camp. Victory may be far away, so it is your duty to escape, but this will not be easy. It will take careful planning and much patience, culminating in a skilful and resourceful implementation. In the camp you are closely guarded but while you follow the daily routine you will need to slip away unnoticed to reconnoitre the situation and collect tools and materials necessary for your chosen escape route. There are many avenues of escape, some difficult, all certainly dangerous and each one requiring different skills or equipment.
Game Design Copyright Denton Designs 1986
Screen shots taken from various computer formats
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What's up, Doc? Robotic rabbits, that's what! Clare Edgeley investigates the invasion of your local arcade by bunny rabbits and takes a look at *Rabbit Punch*. *Tiger Road* and *Terra Force* also come in for the Arcade Action treatment this issue.

► RABBIT PUNCH

Arcade manufacturers have always been quick to make games based on weird and wonderful people and objects – but Taito's robotic rabbit must take this year's prize for the whackiest game to be released.

That's not to say that *Rabbit Punch* is a bad game, in fact it's an extremely playable shoot 'em-up that has all elements that you would expect to find in a good game. It's just takes a little time to get used to flying a Rabbit through a space station shooting robotic animals and tins of carrots!

You play the part of the heroic rabbit on a mission to rescue two bunny girls and a man called King who have been kidnapped. Each one has been hidden in the three different levels of the game – the space station, an asteroid base and on the surface of a planet.

The game has the option of two players on screen at once as well as two difficulty levels. The game looks as if it would be a very good two player game, I unfortunately didn't get the chance to play with a partner.

Your galactic bunny is armed with bullets and unlimited supply of smart bombs which are very useful when the screen becomes packed with nasties. The beginning of the game is fairly easy and you should manage to get through the first couple of stages without too many problems. But remember to shoot those cans of carrots for extra bonuses.

At the end of each stage there is a bonus screen where you must catch carrots which fall from the top of the screen. You have to be quick because as soon as one reaches the bottom you're chance for lots of bonus ends.

The graphics are excellent and the very detailed backdrops of outer space and the interior of the asteroid base add a lot to the game.

Further into the game things become considerably more hectic and you'll need to use the continue play feature if you want to see more of the game.

The further levels become almost maze-like and it can become very difficult to get through and you quite often get trapped in a corner fighting off the aliens, and end up a squashed bunny!

The best aliens in the game are human shaped heads with glaring red eyes which attack you relentlessly. They look surprisingly like the editor after a night out on the town!

Rabbit Punch is an entertaining and humorous game that I would recommend spending a few ten pences on.









ACTION

● TIGER ROAD

Karate games seem to run and run. The home computer has seen dozens of martial arts games – some classics and more than enough howlers. Capcom's *Tiger Road* carries the tradition on in the arcades and surprisingly manages to make an interesting and very playable game out of this over-used formula.

The game allows you to choose which level you'd like to start on. You can begin by trying to fight your way through all the bosses' areas or you can jump past most of these and take on the two most powerful criminals.

The action is much as you would expect. Hordes of samurai warriors assail you from all directions swinging large curved axes. You can despatch your enemies with your sword or by effective use of your karate kick.

The first level begins outside. Apart from the warriors there is a large man sitting on top of a ruined temple thrusting a very sharp pike into your body from time to time. You must make good use of your jumping abilities here and leap on top of the ruined building and give him a taste of your sword.

The next section pits you up against a real giant this time. You must time your attacks perfectly – if you let him get too close to you, he'll grab you around the throat, half strangle you and throw your crushed body across the screen.

If you manage to survive this beast, the ordeal of the rolling stone balls begins. Timing is, as always, vital. Jump one moment too soon, or late, and you're squashed.

Once you leap the last rock you find yourself trapped in a cell with what looks like a homicidal sumo wrestler. He's quite an acrobat, climbing up the walls and swing across the ceiling.

The game is very large and has many levels, there are forest scenes and a level where you pick up a magic coat that allows you to fly through a cavern populated by dragons.

Tiger Road is a must for all martial arts fans, and all the game's levels will keep you occupied for some time.







● TERRA FORCE



Most coin-op games tend to rely on either a side on or a bird's eye view of the game to present the action. *Terra Force* is an unusual game in that it swops between these two views during the game.

You begin the game by having your fighter craft dropped from its mothership into what looks like a large city that's been destroyed by nuclear war. What seems unusual is that the city appears to go underground and your fighter plane must dodge the stalactites which hang down from the top of the screen – they also fire laser pulses down, which tends to make destroying your alien attackers a little difficult.

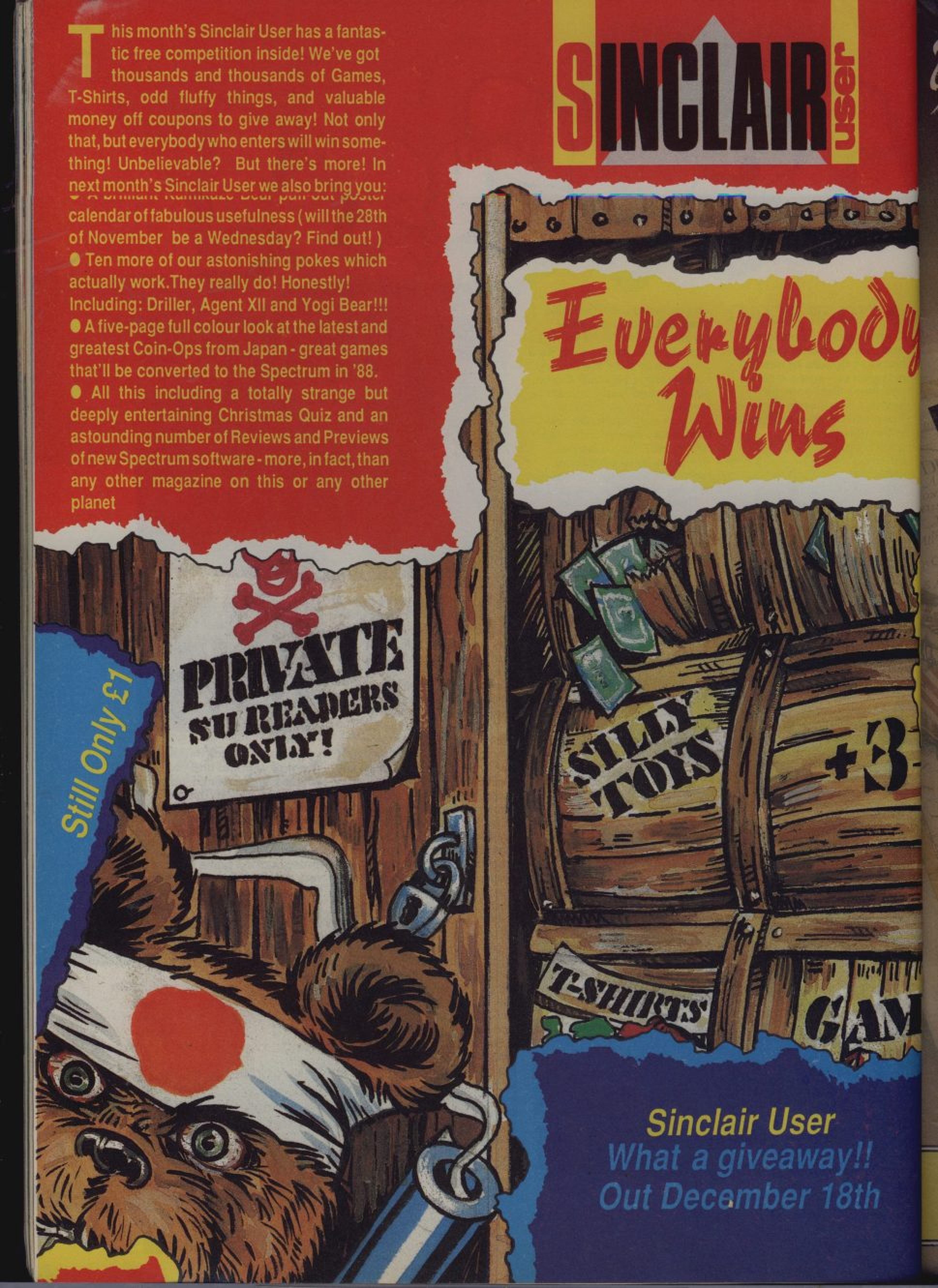
If the stalactites are blasted enough you will discover your escape route from the subterranean city. Once the hanging rock takes enough hits it will begin to shake violently and fall to the bottom of the screen – leaving a hole just large enough for a fighter plane to squeeze through.

If you hoped that you might get a respite from the action, you'd be very much mistaken. The view changes and you find yourself flying over a *Uridium*-style space station. This section of the game is remarkably like the classic Commodore 64 shoot 'em-up.

The graphics are good throughout the game and are very detailed. The graphics of the devastated city are particularly good. The lightning flashing past your fighter on that level is very realistic.

1)	**1942**	Capcom
2)	**Wonder Boy**	Sega
3)	**Bubble Bobble**	Taito
4)	**Arkanoid**	Taito
5)	**Pacland**	Namco
6)	**Rygar**	Techmo
7)	**Ghosts 'n' Goblins**	Capcom
8)	**Terra Cresta**	Nichibutsu
9)	**Express Raiders**	Data East
10)	**Choplifter**	Sega

The Top Ten is compiled by Euromax and shows the most popular games nationwide



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● A five-page full colour look at the latest and greatest Coin-Ops from Japan - great games that'll be converted to the Spectrum in '88.
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Mailbag.

● Now you and everybody else must know about Play By Mail, well I think it's about time that PBM should not be taken lightly as a two page feature in C+VG. I think that PBM should take up a few more pages in C+VG and maybe go on to be another sister magazine to C+VG and CU as an adventure magazine just like *White Dwarf*. Surely PBM is a growing hobby and should expand on to other new magazines, don't you think so too! It is obvious that most people would agree with me so please do something about this.
Wenchin Ng,
London.
Editor's reply: What do the rest of our readers think?

● First of all, congratulations. How have you managed it? You've managed to keep the price of your mag down to £1 but you've just about doubled its size while almost all the others have jacked their price up to about £1.25 or shrunk until they're just a cover and a few pages.

Second, why don't Micropose release more Amstrad versions of their flight sims? I'd like to see *Solo Flight II* and *Gunship* so how about it, guys?

Back to the magazine. I loved the cover cassette but the music sounds nothing like the Thundercats' tune. How about including a demo of 720° or *Out Run* on a future cover cassette?

You're getting better at the competitions now. There's only one arty one in this ish – keep it that way!
David Brown
North Walsham,
Norfolk.
Editor's reply: Your wish is answered this ish David. OK, so it's not a demo of the game – but the 720° and Out Run soundtracks are pretty nifty 'aint they.

● Okay, I've written this letter enough times and this time I want it published! I, like Colin Campbell in your November issue, used to have a BBC, but I have recently bought an Atari 520 STFM. I agree with him on the aspect that the price of the ST games is ridiculous but I feel that if you shop around you can considerably reduce the price of the games you want to buy. Also I feel that the size of the games which you buy balances the price. When in the BBC world you fork out £15 or so for a game which is, I admit, of a reasonable size, but due to the memory capacity of the Beeb not even nearly upto the length of a game such as *Knight Orc*, which if you shop around you can buy for £14 or less. Still, I do hope that the price of games does fall as my budget is running out fast.

Also, another point brought up in the *Mailbag* was the idea of an essay competition. In my opinion that is a great idea, although I can see one problem and that would be the judging of the essay. However, if you ask for a "short story" competition this would make the job a lot easier. Think about it.
Mark Perry,
Berkshire.
Editor's reply: The price of ST software is dropping quickly – and you can expect it to get cheaper. Paul is a big fan of the short story idea – watch out for one soon!

● Until I read your *Play By Mail* page in the May issue of C+VG I had never heard of PBM but from that day I have enjoyed every minute of it.

I have been housebound for the last nine years with agoraphobia and apart from reading every book in my local library and playing on my Amstrad, I felt that I needed something else. So, after reading your *It's A Crime* review, I joined and it's been a delight to use the old grey matter in something more taxing than blasting aliens to bits.

After turn 10 I am pleased to be second in the notoriety list but also with a much larger gang than my nearest rivals. So out went the computer. I would just like to thank you once again for introducing me to PBM and maybe one day we will cross swords in some game we are playing.
Leslie Bunker
Devon.
Editor's reply: You are one of many new recruits to the joys of PBM, Leslie. Glad you enjoy it. How about trying some other games?

● Well, here I am again, with two grouses (grice?) this time. (A brace of grice?). I catalogue them as follows.
1. Who is the old bat running *Ideas Central*? Where has Melissa gone? I warn you now that I will be there in horrible person to wring the truth out of you if no satisfactory answer is forthcoming. Fiendish notice is hereby given that I am drumming up support for the "Bring back Melissa" campaign, and we shall not be denied!
2. Am I wrong? Did I really note at a casual glance that the ST version of "Indiana Jones" only runs in medium resolution on a colour monitor? Is it standard practice, or should all games run in all three modes? If forking out over 20 quid we deserve to know in advance what equipment is needed. Should this not be an essential part of your reviews? I rephrase that, it MUST be an essential part of your reviews!
3. Yes, I have thought of another one. Despite Tony Takoushi's article recently, naughty bits are still appearing in C+VG. (November issue, page 143).

Don't get me wrong, for I LIKE naughty bits, but it isn't very consistent, is it?
The Farringdon Fiend, Oxon.

Editor's reply: There's always someone ready to pounce on any small error isn't there? And it's usually YOU! Still, Melissa, as you know, has been spirited away – that's a clue, actually – and can only be saved by tons of hints tips and pokes – and no, that's not another naughty bit!

● We are two Danish dudes who have read your until recently abs fab mag for at least four years. We are afraid that a few points of complaint have sneaked into our view of it. To use the words of the otherwise excellent Tony Takoushi, "We buy computer magazines to read about computers and games", not to read about Heavy Metal, Films, or Play By Mail. Play By Mail is about games, but does it belong in *C+VG*? Not in our opinion!

We have read the page a couple of times and never found it interesting. The question stands: Does it belong in a magazine about computer and video games?

Films is the one column of these we enjoy reading, but again does it belong in this mag? If people want to read about films why not buy a film mag? There are plenty of them around.

Heavy Metal is something we hate. It must be a limited part of C+VG's readers that ever listens to this kind of music, so why include it? If you really want a music section in your mag why not include funk, classic, jazz, etc? We prefer breasts to both films, Play By Mail, and Heavy Metal!

Change of subjects . . . Prices (moaning, moaning, we know). We find it rather stupid when you English complain about games at £9.99 so let's take a Danish example: *Flight Sim II*, by SubLogics. Retail prices, England: £24.99, Denmark: apr. £55.00. Would you buy a game at 55 quid? NO WAY!

Changing subjects again. The continuing battle between good and evil in the universe, eeeer, between Amiga and ST. Why won't people realise that both of them are excellent machines?

The Amiga has a small advantage on hardware (Sound, well better sound, better graphics, and a blitter fitted when sold) and the ST has an equally small advantage on software.

As Amiga owners we would, of course, like to encourage software houses to produce primarily on the Amiga instead of the ST, and then convert it to ST. We find it sad to see these mostly pathetic ST conversions on the Amiga.

Reaching the end (phew we hear the audience say) we would like to thank you, because you do have the best games mag on the market. Keep up the quality, previews, reviews, news, give Keith Campbell a raise, and please try to control the otherwise excellent Tony Takoushi when he tries to comment on things he knows nothing about – such as breasts.
ToTall Jones, and Jesse Jackson, Denmark.

…eply: I wouldn't like to comment on Tony's knowledge of breasts – I might end up with a libel case on my hands. However – don't agree that nothing outside computers belongs in the mag – 106,000 readers prove otherwise.

● I have just bought the December issue of C+VG and I am writing to you to tell you how impressed I am. It is the first time I have bought the magazine, and I should say I don't often buy computer magazines.

Yours must surely be the most detailed, colourful, informative, and reasonable of all the publications on this subject. Well done, this is one magazine I'll certainly be purchasing every time it appears in the future.
Adam Barah, Sheffield.

Editor's reply: Aww, gee, gosh, Adam . . . You're making me blush.

CHAMONIX CHALLENGE

A

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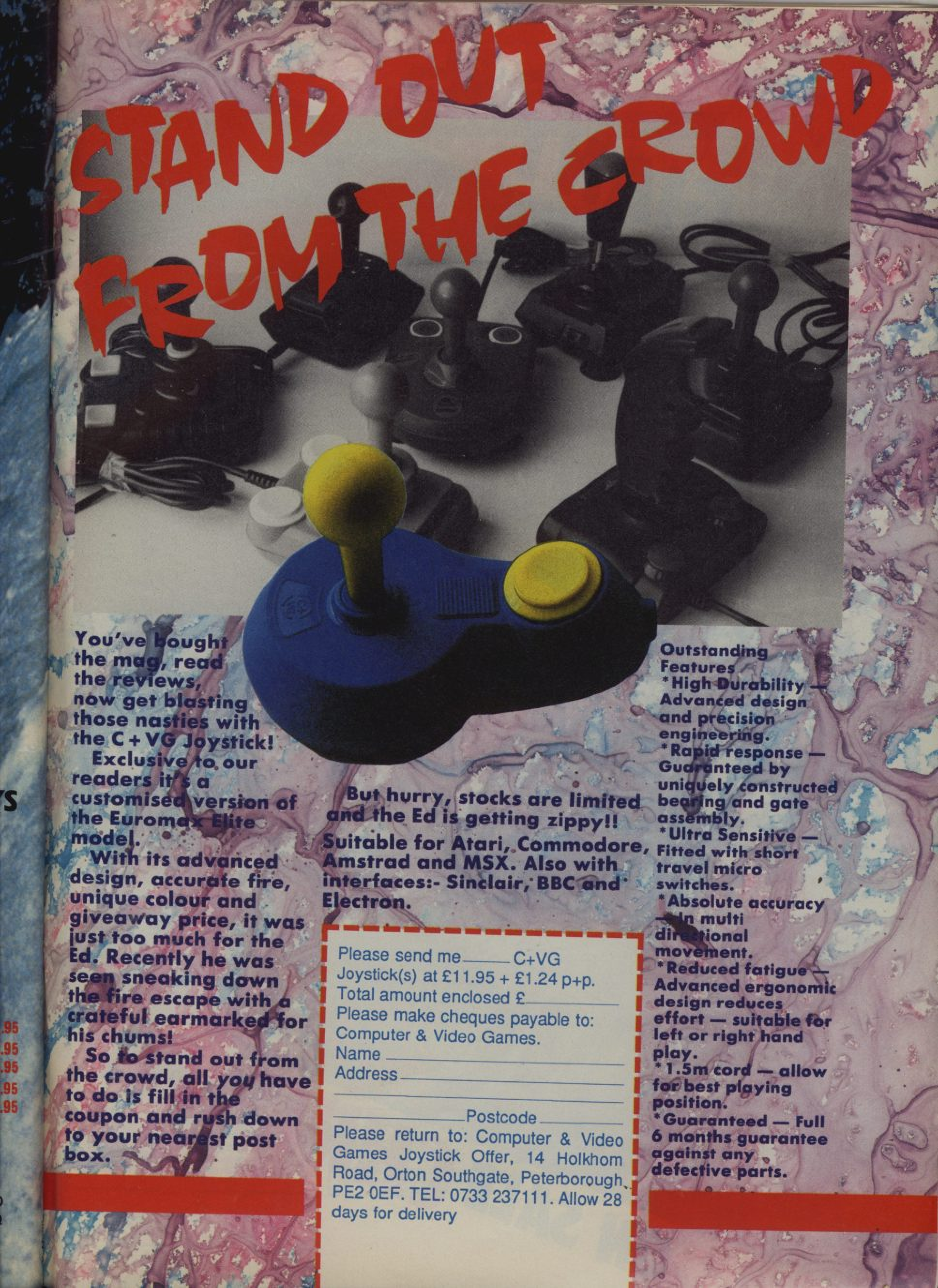
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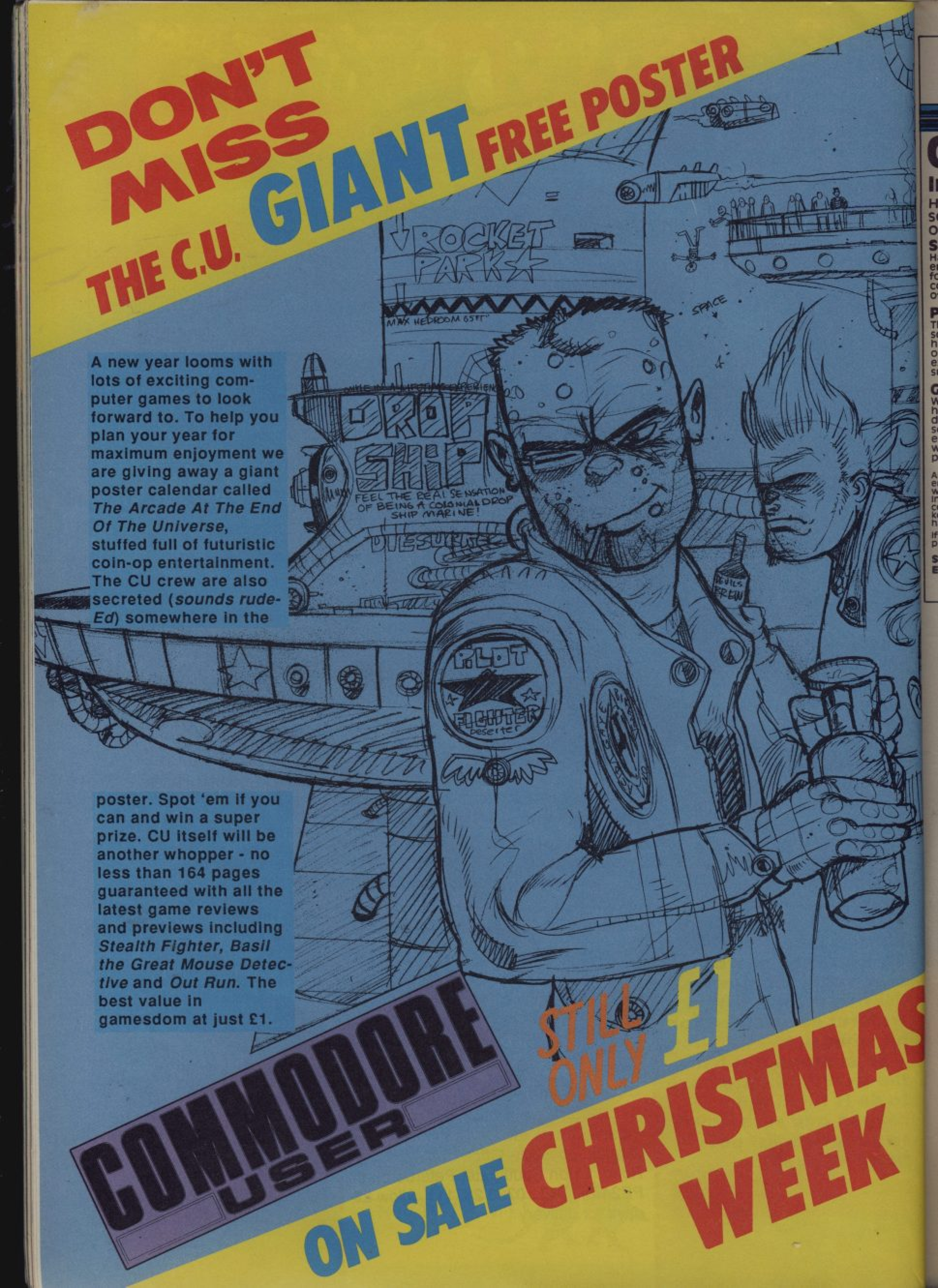
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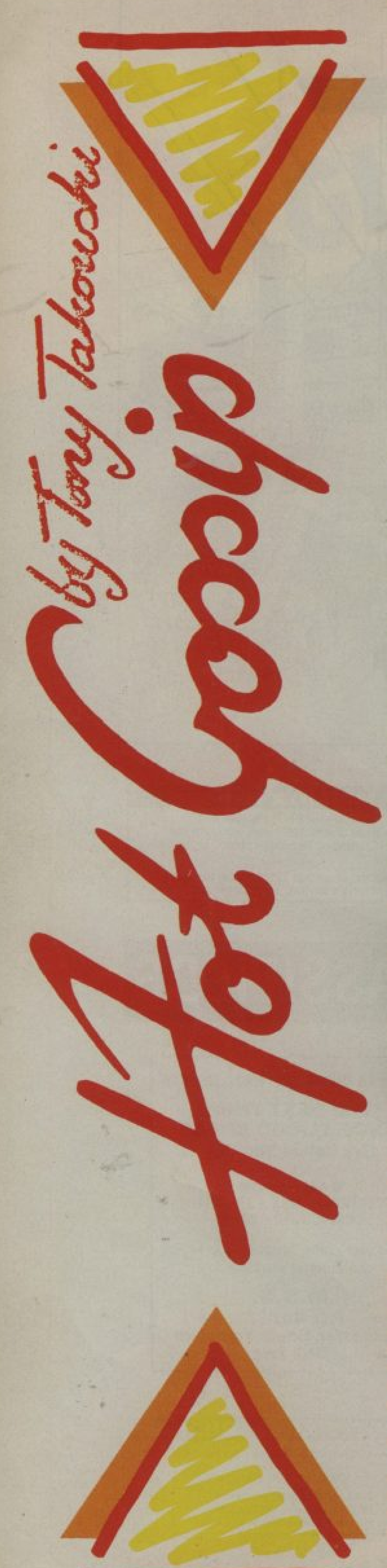
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Loud and proud and ready to shock. Yes, C+VG's very own Mr T — Tony Takoushi — is back to rant and rave about computer games. Love or hate him, just read him.

I was on my way back from Wales and had just pulled up to a set of lights when all of a sudden I heard a screech and then CRRR-UNCH!

The driver of the Rover behind me decided that my boot needed reshaping and the front of his car was just the tool. I leapt out and took a look: "You loony! Just look what you have done to my car!"

"Gosh I am awfully sorry," he replied.

Instead of losing my cool, I thought I would do the decent thing. "Why don't you improve your driving by playing *Test Drive*, the latest Amiga car simulation?"

He replied: "That's jolly decent of you, old bean, I will take your advice. . ."

I have got a sneaky feeling that when his insurance company get the repair bill for my car (a touch over £7,000) they will do more than insist he play a car sim. . .

Enough bantering, this months offering is another Amiga GEM, Accolade has produced yet another masterpiece with a full blown driving simulation called *Test Drive*. As to be expected it has a lot of polish, presentation and ease-that-joystick-into-the-palm-of-your-hand playability.

You get to choose from a variety of very sporty cars and then have to drive it over a precarious mountain road trying to cover set distances in the alloted time.

On booting the game you are faced with a Porsche 911 Turbo filling up most of the screen (beautifully detailed), the window slides down, the driver winks at you and then his head is slammed back into the headrest as the car rolls off the screen.

A little digitised speech tells you that you are about to play *Test Drive*, and you get a nifty little hi-res piccy of car keys.

Not being skimpy on cash you can choose from, a 911 Porsche, Lotus Turbo Esprit, Lamborghini Countach, Chevy Corvette or a plain little old Ferrari Testarossa.

The screen is split into two, the top third is a hi-res piccy of the car and the bottom two-thirds detail just about every tech-spec you could want to know about the car (price, acceleration speeds, braking distance, full engine description, tyres and an acceleration chart).

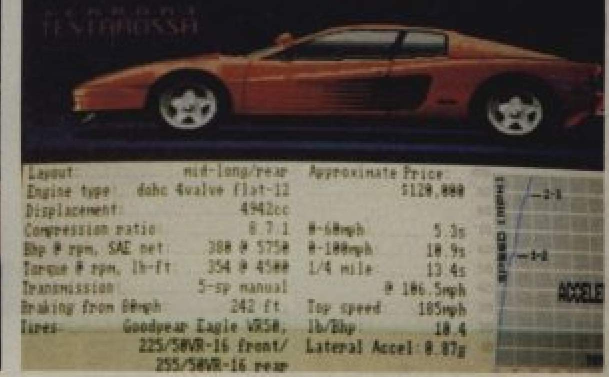
On choosing your car you go to the driving scene, the difference in car is represented by a different view out of the driving seat (a different dash layout and different acceleration performance).

There are few guages to watch (speedo, revs, oil) the real emphasis is on the driving. You also get a rear view mirror (useful to spot those darn police sneaking up on you) and a radar detector for speed traps (almost standard issue for many in the US).

To move you have to hit the fire button to get the gear screen up and slip a gear in, then push the stick up to accelerate. As you build up speed you change gear until you hit a speed you are happy with. There was only a mountain scene on my version of the game, although I hear other scenery discs are planned.

It looks as though Electronic Arts will be distributing it in the UK with a conversion to the Commodore 64 to follow. If you want a classy and extremely playable car driving sim then THIS IS THE ONE.





Within the next 15-18 months all Commodore, Spectrum and Amstrad dedicated magazines will go to the wall in various ways.

Well if you think about it I'm not really putting my head on the chopping block, 16-bit machines ARE HERE and dropping in price, consoles are here (and may even drop in price) and 8-bit owners will not stand still, they will upgrade to 16-bit or consoles (if not both!).

They do not have anywhere else to go.

Of course the dedicated mags don't have to fade away, they can expand their horizons and take in the new machines, but then they aren't dedicated (kinda obvious huh?). They can move sideways and incorporate arcade machines, 16-bit and consoles as well as covering the fading 8-bit market.

Take a look at the market at present, Newsfield looks to be moving towards a decline, it has lost several KEY members of staff recently (editors of *Zzap* and *The Games Machine*) and some would say *Zzap* is losing its direction, and *Crash* could well follow it. The main competitor to *C+VG* is meant to be Newsfield's *The Games Machine*. Its two leading lights, Graeme Kidd and Gary Penn have been sacked, and it is being sold as a bi-monthly mag.

The other alternative to C+VG is said to be from Future Publishing, and the brains behind it is Chris Anderson (ex-PCG and Zzap).

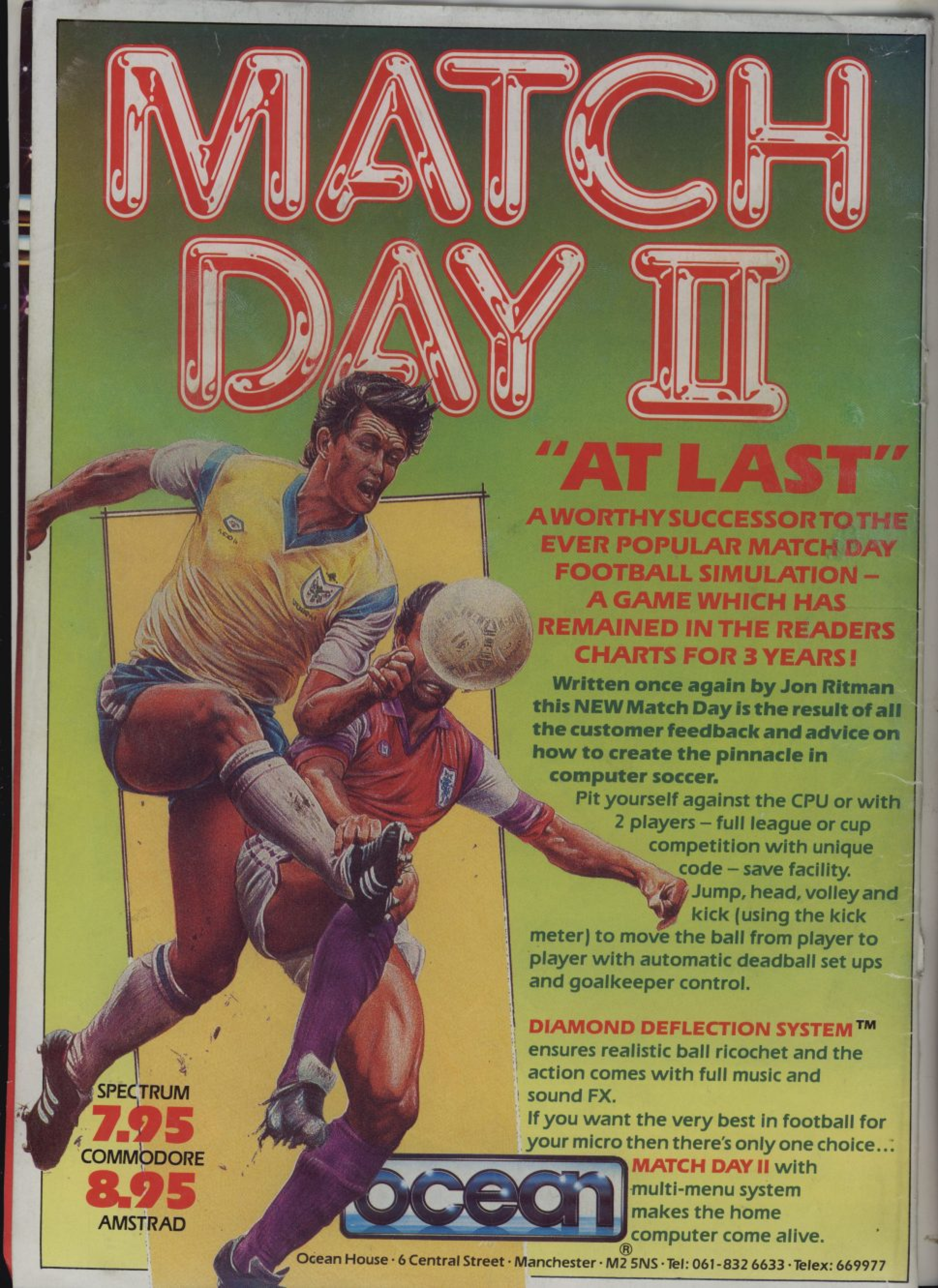
C+VG has been around from day one, it has retained its strong presence in the market even when many others have fallen, and I have worked for some of those opposing mags! So it's quality and reader following rate second to none.

So why am I reviewing (no, NOT slagging off) the mag scene?

Well I remember conversations with certain people within Newsfield and Future Publishing where they said that user dedicated mags will take over and mags like C+VG will just fade away.

Well sorry, guys, you were way outta line, and as they say imitation is a most sincere form of flattery. . .


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